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**WILLIAM B. CAIRNS COLLECTION
OF
AMERICAN WOMEN WRITERS
1650-1920**



**WILLIAM B. CAIRNS
PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON**

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Hours with Girls.

BY

MRS. MARGARET E. SANGSTER,

AUTHOR OF "MAY STANHOPE AND HER FRIENDS," "SPLENDID
TIMES," ETC.

"Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."



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HOURS WITH GIRLS.

CHAPTER I.

THE RIGHT USE OF TIME.

THE excuse most frequently offered for neglect of any kind of duty is want of time. To hear people talk, one would imagine that time was very partially distributed, and that some persons had a great deal more of it given them than others have. In fact, as we all know, there is no gift of God which is so exactly divided and apportioned among his children. We have each the same number of hours in every day, and the queen in her palace has just as many as, and no more than, the little maiden who carries her father's dinner to the mill. In this one particular, God has treated us all precisely alike. ✓

The possession of any talent, opportunity, or privilege implies a responsibility on the part of the possessor. Time is ours, not to be wasted, not to be spent in luxurious ease, and not to be lost in idle fretting. It

is ours to be improved. Let me tell you some of the ways in which we can best improve it.

If I repeat the word *system*, I am prepared to hear some of you say, "Oh, do not come to us with that old story. We have been told to be systematic from our cradles, and really there is nothing which we are so tired of hearing." Patience, dear girls. I can sympathize with that one of you who said to me the other day, "I am emancipated at last! I have spent six years of routine at boarding-school, my life measured by the sound of bells; a bell for this recitation, and a bell for that; and now I am free. But," she acknowledged frankly, "I confess that I don't know what use to make of my freedom." There is a sort of reaction which most young people experience when, after graduation, they find themselves absolved from attendance upon the will of teachers and governors, and it finds expression in some such manner as this. Yet no conscientious and thoughtful person can long be contented to drift aimlessly through life. That training amounts to little which has trained towards nothing; and the best school, if it has simply crammed, and not given force and impulse to right and unselfish and generous endeavor, has written itself a failure.

It is well to remember that system is bad or good, according as you serve it or compel it to serve you. It is not a good thing to be chained to your system, so that you have no personal liberty. It is a good thing

to arrange your time in a general and orderly method, with a view to learning, thinking and accomplishing as much as you can every day. For instance, Eleanor decides that she will spend four hours daily at the piano, from nine until eleven in the morning, and from one until three in the afternoon. But her aunt Mary comes in to luncheon, and invites her to go to a picture-gallery and see a very beautiful painting, which will be on exhibition for a few days only. If Eleanor is the servant of her system, it will make her unhappy to yield or postpone an hour of her afternoon practice, and she will decline the invitation, or accept it without real enjoyment. We never enjoy anything fully of which we have a question in our minds as to our right to enjoy it at all. If, on the contrary, her system is her servant, she will reason thus: "My aunt has been so kind as to offer me an hour of pleasure, a real treat, and I am glad it has come in my way. It is one of the unexpected good things which God sends me in some days of my life. I will let the piano rest, and make up the practice I miss, by degrees, during the week."

The reason why, so often, courses of reading, courses of study, and such enterprises generally, fall through and are abandoned, is because they are found to be rigid, obtrusive, and inelastic. No young woman at home can invariably command her time for a purpose of her own. Frequently she must consult the

convenience, the desires, and even the inclinations of her parents, brothers, and sisters. She who sets out to regulate her day with no reference to the claims and the comfort of the household, will discover that she is likely to be frustrated and embarrassed in half a dozen ways daily. If she persists in her plan, because it is hers, and because she regards self-culture as the highest aim, she will be unamiable, unlovely, and angular, and her influence in the family circle will not be sweet and helpful.

What I would advise is, that every young girl should, so far as she can, ascertain what share of the housework and of the social obligations of the family is properly hers. Home is not merely a domicile, a roof and four walls, a place in which to eat and sleep. It is an abode in which kindred and friends, bound by dearest ties and community of interests, are dwelling together. It ought to be a place of quiet and satisfying repose—a place which is a type of heaven. An inharmonious, unrestful, ill-assorted home is a very sad and pitiable blot in the world, a noxious weed instead of a fragrant flower. A daughter or sister can do very much toward filling her home with beauty and gladness if she choose. Think of it, girls. The Bible itself speaks of daughters polished after the similitude of a palace; and from the hour of your birth this is just what you have been to your parents. The crown-jewels are always guarded very carefully in a monarchy, and you

are your parents' crown-jewels. They have tenderly watched over your childhood and youth, they have given you every advantage in their power, and now they expect from you a return of their goodness, a recognition of their love, and a reward for their solicitude. In the right use of your time, therefore, you must not leave them out.

"What can I do to help my dear mother?" This should be a seriously-considered question with all girls. She has borne the burden many years. Can you lighten it in any degree?

There is a large and well-ordered home not far from my own. The two elder daughters are at present, as they express it, letting mother take a vacation, the first she has had in many years. One week Sarah supervises the kitchen and dining-room, and sees that the table is properly furnished with viands, and the economy of everything down stairs administered wisely. Helen at the same time takes charge of the parlors, library, and bedrooms. The next week they change employments, and their mother lives a life of leisure and rest, having time to read, to go out, to receive friends, and to take a well-earned holiday. Perhaps your mother would not like thus to delegate her authority to you for a while, but you may be sure she is willing to have you as her prime-minister. Some portion of the actual work, some sweeping, dusting, bed-making, bread-making, or fine ironing, you ought

How, with G.L.L.

to accept as your own, to be attended to faithfully with your own hands.

Let me quote a bit of Ruskin. I wish, among your ways of improving time, you would include much reading of the works of John Ruskin, a man who, with all his oddities and eccentricities, is constantly on the side of God in the world. He says,

"Woman's work is,

"1. To please people.

"2. To feed them in dainty ways.

"3. To clothe them.

"4. To keep them orderly.

"5. To teach them."

About the fourth of these departments of woman's work Mr. Ruskin says pithily, "Begin by keeping things in order; soon you will be able to keep people, also. Every day do a little bit of housemaid's work in your own house, thoroughly, so as to be a *pattern of perfection* in that kind."

Now let me add my mite of experience to the opinion of the English critic and philosopher, by way of confirmation. Much useful time is wasted by girls and women in doing work of every kind sketchily and hastily and loosely. Be a "*pattern of perfection*" in your housework. If you dust, dust thoroughly. If you make cake, have it light and excellent. If you paint a picture on placque or cup or palette, imitate nature as exactly as you can. If you are learning a piece of

music, do not slur over the difficult bars. If you are reading, read with attention. If you are dressing yourself for home eyes to see you in the morning, do it as neatly, as fastidiously, and as beautifully, as if you were making a toilet for a party. The dress for the breakfast-table or for the kitchen should not be so rich or so elaborate as that for an evening company, but it should be as clean, as refined, as tasteful, and as appropriate as the other, for the end to which it is designed.

Having adjusted yourself to your duties, the quaint, homely little duties which have always been woman's in the home, you may now look about and see what else you can find to do. Time is not ill-spent which is spent in recreation. You should, if possible, be out of doors, in the open air, under the sky, for at least three hours every day. You cannot have high health, good digestion, sound sleep, and equal nerves, unless you are often and regularly in the air and taking rapid exercise. The fine bloom on the cheek, the lustre in the eye, and the spring in the step, which are tokens of unimpaired health, are not to be had unless you spend many hours every week away from heated rooms and in the company of the air, the sunshine, and whatever else free and beneficent Nature has to bestow upon you. It is a duty to be in good health, if possible; and probably half the nervous invalids in the world could escape much suffering if they would obey God's laws written in their bodies. When health has been bartered away

in the pursuit of pleasure, or in reckless waste of any description, it cannot be regained unless at a great cost, and at the price it may be of years of effort. Time can be utilized best by those who are well, and every young girl should *mean* to be well, cheery, and strong, if she can. To this end she should neglect nothing which God puts within her reach for the preservation of health, animation, and vigor.

Among the right uses of time, the daughters of the King should not fail to include self-denying effort for the unfortunate, the poor, or the suffering. Mary Lyon, the large-hearted and beautiful woman who founded Mount Holyoke Seminary, said in one of her conversations with her pupils, "Sacred charity is a pledge of personal consecration. It may be made the test; if we give up in heart, we shall have an opportunity to carry it out in our lives. If we give in sacred charity, and give for Christ's sake, we must give so as to feel the loss of what we give continually."

What is your position with regard to the Sunday-school cause, to domestic missionary and foreign missionary enterprises, and to the poor and friendless children in your own town? Have you ever deprived yourself of a ribbon, a ruffle, a feather, or a flower, that you might contribute money to assist these causes of the Lord God? Have you ever distinctly devoted a part of your time to the work of teaching ignorant boys to read and ignorant girls to sew? They are not al-

ways attractive or winsome or well-behaved, and sometimes they are dirty, ragged, and repulsive in appearance; but if a sweet Christian girl can go to India or China to teach children there the way to the cross, a sweet Christian girl ought to be willing to do the same work for the heathen at home.

I say "sweet" advisedly. A bitter Christian, an acid, cross-grained, crooked Christian, is not living as she ought for her Master. "The cross," said one of the early fathers, "should be such a burden as wings are to a bird, helping us to soar and sing."

She who has accepted Christ and taken his yoke, will find life opening before her as the summer opens with its procession of flowers. There will be about her, too,

"An inborn grace that nothing lacks
Of culture or appliance,
The warmth of genial courtesy,
The calm of self-reliance;"

because the most beautiful, least obtrusive, and most perfect grace, courtesy and self-reliance, are found among those who daily sit with Mary at the Master's feet.

CHAPTER II.

SELF-CONTROL.

THERE is no home, however delightful, in which there do not occasionally arise little causes of provocation or dispute. Annoyances and offences come. Servants are trying and careless. Brothers and sisters do not look at things from the same standpoint; or parents, in the exercise of their prerogative, are, it may be, hasty and injudicious. Human nature is always imperfect, and its imperfections mar the felicity of human relationships. A home which should always be full of peace, happiness, and unselfishness, would be a very fitting type of heaven.

One great source of discord in the household is the fact that there are, frequently, several people in it who desire to have their own way. It is mysterious, this clinging to one's own way, merely for the sake of having it, and when no real object of importance is to be gained by it; and still we see it continually. One obstinate, selfish child in a family can, by means of this disposition, so tyrannize over the others as to make everybody miserable. One such young woman, who has grown up without having learned the beauty of

humility, can metamorphose the fairest home into a place of strife and wretchedness.

Now, girls, I want to impress upon you two or three thoughts which are well worth your consideration. The first is that, in itself, there is nothing lofty or noble in the desire to have one's way for merely selfish reasons. A book has lately been published which gives an inside view of Napoleon's court, as it was seen by a lady who was a maid of honor to the Empress Josephine. What a pitiable picture the conqueror of Europe presents! Angrily stalking about the rich chambers of the fair palace of St. Cloud, dashing down chairs and tables in his insane wrath, terrorizing those who waited upon him by a torrent of fierce words, and breaking the hearts of men and women, without regret or remorse—this was the way of a man who had led armies to victory, but who had not mastered himself. In a less conspicuous, but equally reprehensible way, many an obscure domestic circle is blighted and saddened by somebody whose conscience has not been educated in regard to the rights of others properly. The daughter or sister whose first thought is for *her own* satisfaction and pleasure, is in peril of drifting into moods which will make her most unlovely and unloving.

The next thought is, that we never really gain our own will if we are always consciously striving to do so. The deep, strong river has a noiseless flow, and its full

tide carries the great ships to the sea. The noisy, fretting brook leaps and dances, and repeats its little songs and cries upon the stones, but it carries only its tiny cup of water to the large calm stream. There are natures ample and majestic as the river, and natures shallow and capricious as the brook. Which shall be yours? Depend upon it, the surest way to carry forward your purposes is to be willing, while doing so, to aid, comfort, and bless the rest in their endeavors. In every house, in every community, in every nation, going on from the smaller to the larger, it is the self-controlled person who wins the day, who holds the balance of power, and who diffuses the widest influence. No personal ascendancy is ever gained by scolding. The sharp, bitter tongue, may be potent in making people miserable, but after a while they become used to it, and it goes by them like the idle wind.

I shall never forget my horror, when, myself a school-girl, I met the mother of one of my companions. My own home, presided over by a mother who was a singularly sweet and winning, as well as thoughtful and earnest woman, was filled with the atmosphere of genuine affection and cordiality. Lilian invited me to visit her at her home. I went. Hardly had we crossed the threshold before I heard a shrill, high-pitched voice, in cutting accents storming away at a little boy, who had fallen and torn his jacket. I started in surprise. Lilian blushed and said, "Oh, that's noth-

ing in this house. Mother is only angry at Jack; and no wonder, for she cannot keep him looking decent, with all the pains she takes."

Before long, I discovered that Jack was not the only victim of the mother's anger. My friend presented me, and I was courteously and even affectionately received, but the next instant attention was directed to some fault or lack in Lilian's attire, and she was talked to in a way that, from my mother, would well-nigh have broken my heart. A young Irish girl was doing the chamber work, and had left the stains of finger-marks upon the door. She was called back and ordered to obliterate them, with language so abusive and looks so menacing, that I wondered she remained in the house an hour. At the table, in the parlor, in the kitchen, everywhere from morning until night, the termagant kept on, scolding, flouting, finding fault, and distressing husband and children by her vituperation.

Lilian saw my dismay and amazement, and actually laughed. "You see, dear," she remarked, "my mother's bark is worst than her bite. She does everything for us all. She wears herself out for the baby. She sits up with us most tenderly if we are sick. She buys us whatever we ask for; and, as father says, if it amuses her to scold, why, let her do so. It does not hurt us, for we are used to it. We let her talk, and we do as we please."

Often and often since then have I remembered that unhappy lady, her frowning face, her rasping tones, and her perpetual unrest. No wonder her sons ran away from home, one to the West, and one to the sea. No wonder her daughters married without due weighing of the character and fitness of those who sought them. Better was a dwelling anywhere, in tranquillity and composure, than an abode in wealth and luxury, with the accompaniment of harshness and ill temper.

It will very probably fall to your lot, as you grow older, to have the care and oversight of others. This is my third thought. You will never be good housekeepers unless you learn the fine art of self-control.

Domestic service in our country is in a very unsatisfactory state. We cannot depend upon obtaining skilled help in our kitchens. The foreigners who earn their living by cooking and washing and ironing, and housework of every description, are often coarse, ignorant, stupid, and inefficient. Yet, under the direction and management of a kind, patient and judicious mistress, they often perform their duties quite satisfactorily, and sometimes become highly respectable and valuable servants. Self-control on the part of the mistress is really all-important. To lose one's calmness because cups and saucers are chipped, because breakfast is delayed, because the cook is in a fractious mood, or because anything below stairs is a little crooked, is altogether unworthy and ill-bred. Besides, it defeats

itself. You can never possess authority over those less carefully educated and less fortunately placed than yourself, unless you have yourself well in hand. It is well, in our dealings with servants, to remember that it is as unreasonable and as vain to look for absolute perfection among them as to expect to find it in their superiors in station. Do not limit yourself to finding fault with them when they fail; encourage them by judicious praise when they do well; take an interest in their welfare, and let them see that you regard it, and you will have less cause to complain of their unfaithfulness.

Should you ever have little children to guide and train, remember that, for their sakes, you must rule your voice, your tones, and your mind. The quiet mother, she who speaks low and gently, she who smiles sweetly and pleasantly, she who rules her own spirit, has the well behaved and charming little circle of children around her.

While you are still at home, you can acquire practice in self-control. The elder sister always has plenty of opportunities. She has taken pains to arrange her room, which she shares with her younger sister or her little brother, and has felt real pleasure in seeing its perfect order and neatness. She goes out for an hour, and returning, sees at a glance that Bessie or Charlie has been in, and has carelessly left traces of occupation. A hat is thrown upon the bed, a shawl on the

floor, the books are displaced, and the closet-door is open. This is very annoying, but is it sufficiently so to render it pardonable or even wise for her to speak indiscreetly, to utter passionate words, or to shed a flood of tears? For no greater cause than this, I have seen a young girl's composure completely overthrown.

The sister ought to have and to exert a very decided influence over her brothers. Young men in the world are exposed to many subtle temptations. It is well for them if they have sisters whom they love and are proud of, and who can stand between them and the touch of evil. Be willing, dear Emily, to resign that attractive book, and play a duet with Arthur. Even if it cost you something, Louise, to try that rather childish game, which Harry and Frank think so fascinating, put your own letter-writing aside and gratify them. They are growing older every day, and these are golden hours, when you can knit their souls to yours by silken cords which will never lose their strength. You, Amy, have a brother who is the lie and centre of the company he keeps. His gay laugh, his brilliant sallies and his witty repartees make him the delight and the envy of less gifted and duller young men. Such as he are the shining marks whom the adversary tries hardest to ruin with his enchantments. When he asks you, some evening, if you are willing to study German with him, giving up many hours a week to the difficult language, do not hesitate

to comply. The mutual study may be such a defence as you do not dream of. Every sister is, to some extent, her brother's keeper, and every sister should accept the responsibility which is laid upon her, and try to lead her brothers in the ways that ascend to honor and holiness.

"Has self-control anything to do with this?" cries Edith, open-eyed. I reply, it has everything. Self-control implies self-sacrifice, it includes patience and perseverance. It is much more than mere good temper. It is the fairest flower of disciplined character.

How glad I should be if all the bright faces that are bent over these pages would determine to accept, as the crowning bloom of womanhood, the high grace of unselfish love which the Bible everywhere inculcates. In honor preferring one another, bearing one another's burdens, lifting feeble hands, comforting sorrowful hearts, doing good every day—this is the ideal which should arise star-like before us.

Like that fair princess of Hungary, who trod day after day the rocky steep which led from her castle to the village below, bearing white loaves and brown to the starving and the sick, we should be ladies—givers of bread, almoners of a divine bounty. The legend says that when her stern husband was ready to stop her beneficent work, and she tremblingly uncovered her basket at his bidding, lo! roses, red and white, overflowed it in a rich and fragrant shower.

So, if we walk meekly and humbly before God, in the lowly round of common life and common duty, sweet flowers, full of perfume, will spring around our pathway.

When Christiana and her children had left the Interpreter's house, their faces and forms were illuminated with a beautiful inward light, of which they were quite unconscious, though others perceived it with awe. The self-control which is sought in prayer, sets a new beauty on the countenance, and invests even plain and homely features with an expression which is a rare and marvellous charm.

Remember that it is only in prayer, only in seeking before God, and only in renewed and consecrated effort that victory is born. We cannot keep ourselves. "Lord, be thou my helper!" must be our oft-repeated cry, and "Fear not, I will help thee," as oft will be the prompt answer from the Friend who is ever near.

CHAPTER III.

READING THE BIBLE.

THE Bible is a book that never wears out. There are always a few favorite books which their owners read over and over, with ever-increasing delight. There are always a few selected authors who are to us as dear, personal friends. They have helped us when in trouble. They have comforted us when lonely, and they have strengthened us when weak. The Bible is a collection of books, by a number of authors, and the wonderful thing about it is, that there is not one page in the sacred volume which could be spared, nor one writer of the many known and unknown, who has not imparted blessing and consolation and abiding good for thousands of our race in every age.

"I hear you say all this," exclaims Leonora, "yet I must confess that I do not enjoy the Bible. It is sometimes dull and monotonous to me. Often I plod through a chapter wearily. There is a great deal of it that I cannot understand, and a great deal that is expressed in language which seems to me obscure or obsolete. I do not take the interest in it that I do in a good, bright novel. I am surprised at you, and other friends, who do not regard the Bible as dry. I sup-

pose it shocks you to hear me say this, but it is only the truth."

It is better that you, dear Leonora, and those you represent, should be perfectly candid about this matter, than that you should seek to veil your real feelings. A doctor cannot do much to help the patient who will not believe that he is ill. A teacher cannot instruct the pupil who is convinced that he has already learned everything worth knowing. Your open confession that you cannot and do not find satisfaction in the study of the Scriptures makes it easier for me to point out one at least of the reasons why. And while I am doing this, I want to say a word to Emily, whose perplexity is quite different from yours. She wrote to me one day, complaining that she had moods and frames of mind which were strangely opposed to each other. "I think," she said, "that I love God, and that I am trying to follow him; but while I sometimes love to read the Bible, and am filled with a sweet and glad hopefulness as I take in the meanings of the verses, yet I am at other times quite indifferent to it. It is not always the same to me, and I am fitful in the amount of my reading, and have no special time to devote to it."

Now to answer both these girls and both of the classes they represent, I must remind them of certain things which should never be forgotten.

You have all seen a lamp, and you know how different is a lighted from an unlighted one. The former

has a soul of flame, which flashes radiance upon all who approach it. The latter is a dead body, beautiful, perhaps, in form and costly in material, but powerless to direct any one through the darkness until the kindling match has been applied to it.

The Bible was said by one of old to be a lamp unto the feet and a light unto the path. That is really its use. There are hundreds who never find this out, and they read the Bible blindly, and grope blindly along the life-path, because they have not discovered the secret of illumination.

The Holy Spirit's office is to reveal the Bible to us. We must pray for him to make it plain to us. And having done this, we must use common sense in our study of it. Perhaps you have spent many months in learning a foreign language, French or German—or a dead language, Latin or Greek. It was hard, slow, painful plodding for a long while. The genders, the numbers, the cases, the conjugations, the pronunciation, and the idiom, annoyed, distressed, and puzzled you; but you trusted your instructor, you toiled on with grammar and dictionary, and you hoped that one day what was hard would grow easy, and what was hidden be made manifest. There were treasures locked away in that unmastered tongue, and you could possess yourself of them if you but had the key.

One day of days you ascertained that you had really made progress. You began to see. Construc-

tions and nice distinctions were no longer baffling. You were getting hold of a vocabulary, and the verbs were no longer like armed giants disputing every step of your way. You began to be aware that you, too, would be able to read classic literature, or penetrate into the realms of German poetry and French criticism. It had all come about so gradually, if you had been diligent and faithful in your study, that you could not tell the precise time at which you began to find more enjoyment than hard work in your persevering labor.

To any one who will take the same pains to read and study the Bible, as she would to read and study a branch of science, a history, or a foreign language, the Bible will yield the same reward, only in a greater measure, than any of these would. Ransack the Scriptures as you would ransack the house for the jewel you have lost, and you will be repaid by finding pearls of wisdom and diamonds of beauty. Study it regularly, faithfully, and thoroughly, and you will love the study.

Lord Macaulay's plan in undertaking a foreign language was to begin at once with the Bible in that tongue, because the Bible contains always the greatest number of strong, homely, and popular words used by the people. John Bunyan, who had no books or learning worth speaking of, so studied the Bible that he absorbed its culture, and it became more to him than universities are to most of their graduates. Not alone the wonderful *Pilgrim's Progress*, but all his works are

full of suggestive and earnest thoughts, because in the long solitude of his cell in Bedford jail he had almost learned the Bible by heart. When the great Sir Walter Scott was on his death-bed, he asked a friend to read to him. "What book shall I take?" said the friend. "There is but one," was the instant reply.

Try, instead of the somewhat mechanical way of reading the Bible straight through from Genesis to Revelation, the way of reading it through on special subjects. Take prayer, for instance, and starting from the Sermon on the Mount, where the Lord so kindly taught his disciples to pray, find out how, like bell responding to bell, the silver tones echo through the Scriptures. In the morning of the world, Abraham and Moses pleaded with God as a man with his friend. It is worth considering, the close, intimate, and fearless manner in which the saints of old went to the heavenly Father. Go through the Old Testament, and everywhere you will find that men who prayed, prayed confidently, and as if they expected an answer. Often the answer came as directly as a mother's reply to her child who seeks a gift or asks a favor. Hezekiah was sick unto death, and he prayed, and the Lord added fifteen years to his life. Daniel knelt three times a day, with his face turned to the east, and the Lord granted him wisdom and knowledge, riches and honor.

But to get the full sweetness, the subtly pervasive bouquet of the idea of prayer, one must go to the New

Testament. You will see Jesus often retiring from the little company of those who loved him to spend whole nights in communion with God. You will read the words of Paul, of Peter, and of John, all enjoining the duty and testifying to the privilege of prayer. To sum up in one sentence the teachings of the whole New Testament on the theme: "In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."

Prayer is but a single topic. Love, faith, patience, experience, practical sense in dealing with the emergencies of daily life, all can be taken up in this way. The concerns of the spiritual life, the tenderness of Christ, the miracles, the prophecies, the songs of thanksgiving, the promises to those in trouble, and the sure, sweet revelations of God's will concerning us in this world and the next, may be profitably studied in this manner. Or the lives of various great men and women may be read, for the Bible is a collection of biographies, and, unlike other biographers, the sacred writers invariably relate the whole truth about their heroes and heroines.

Literature is full of allusions to the Bible. On the lower ground of mere mental cultivation, no woman can afford to be ignorant of the Bible, for without it she cannot read intelligently any of the history or poetry or fiction or philosophy of modern times. But beyond and above this ground is the higher reason that

it is God's word, and that Jesus said, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me."

Have a stated time for your Bible reading, and let it be as early in the day as practicable. Too often we go to our Bibles when we are jaded, wearied, and worn. We are unfit for the least intellectual task, yet we go to the Book of books, and languidly or sleepily read some grand prophecy, or sweet psalm, or tender incident in the Master's life of love, and think we have fulfilled an obligation.

Sometimes we are very careful about the outward form of our Bible, liking to have it handsomely bound, and of clear type and fine paper. It is well to have the best edition one's purse can buy, and if there is a margin for luxuries anywhere, surely the taste may be gratified about the style of one's Bible. A fine copy, with marginal references, maps, text-book, and concordance, is a precious treasure, and will become dearer as use makes it a part and parcel of the most sacred hours. But a copy of the Bible may be purchased for a merely nominal sum, and still be almost as valuable, if rightly prized, as the more costly one.

Do not treat the blessed book as if it were a bit of rare china or bric-à-brac, the ornament of the parlor only. It is not true veneration which thus behaves towards the word of God. It is on the daily path that we need daily guidance. In a strange country we must

consult the compass, and see where the needle points. From earth to heaven the road is beset with difficulties, but if we walk by God's light we shall walk in safety.

The Bible has a very wonderful history. It will repay you to read it. You will see how, through dark and stormy periods, the manuscripts of inspiration have been preserved, hidden from foes, tucked away in convent libraries, copied out, word by word, by the patient labor of conscientious monks, and guarded as by the Lord's own hand through ages of tempestuous strife. You will see that we ought not to set a light value on what God has kept for us through fire and flood.

A friend said to me one day that she was sometimes tormented by doubts which came into her mind unbidden, and destroyed her inward peace. She said they made her wretched. If such an experience has ever been yours, believe that there is one remedy which never fails, one antidote which is effectual against the poison of doubt: read the Bible prayerfully. If the wrong thoughts intrude, read it the more earnestly. Try the plan of reading it aloud, so that the ear takes account as well as the eye of the passage under review. Man may not be able to assist you if you are in mental distress; but the Father above can lift you out of every perplexity, and put a new song in your mouth.

CHAPTER IV.

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE.

IN choosing friends and companions among your own sex, you cannot be too careful, for our friendships color our thoughts and affect our lives more than we know. If we associate habitually with those who have a low tone, who estimate things by appearances rather than realities, who are ostentatious, insincere, or irreligious, we shall not escape without injury. Nobody touches pitch and remains pure. No greater misfortune can befall a young woman than at the critical period, when girlhood is approaching maturity, to form an intimate friendship with a worldly or cold-hearted woman. The bloom of youth is insensibly brushed from the soul, and the sweet freshness which should be given to God is lost and dissipated.

If this be true of women, it is true in a deeper sense when the companionship is between women and men. A young girl gives much of herself to the youth whom she takes as her dearest friend for life, and she runs a great risk when she commits her happiness to the care of one who does not honor and love God, and who is not lofty in his morals, unstained in his integrity, and temperate in his conduct.

It is natural that you should enjoy the admiration and be pleased with the company of the other sex. But do not be like some girls whom I have seen, who never enter with much enthusiasm into the pursuits of the hour if ladies only are present, but who are all a-flutter with smiles and animation if a gentleman be announced. Do not be like some, who have little time to spare for the society of their brothers, who do not care to sing or play for them, and who count the cost of every gracious word and act spent in their own homes, but who are enthusiastic, charming, and beautiful when they meet gentlemen in the festive circle.

Do not let yourselves drift into the habit of thinking that every man who pays you a pleasant compliment or a polite attention is thinking of you as his future wife. And do not regard marriage as the only thing worth living for.

A happy marriage is indeed the crown of a woman's life, but many women live in a large, noble, and useful way, blessing all around them, and yet are never married. The term *old maid* signifies an ideal which is not lovely. One thinks of a cross, pinched, disappointed, narrow, angular woman, devoted to herself, loving her pet cat or dog, and finding fault with all the world, when one hears the opprobrious term applied. In point of fact, an old maid is often the favorite of the family. She is the kind aunt to whom the little ones

carry their stories of trouble. It is she who has leisure to listen to the slow and perhaps rambling talk of old age. She goes to the chamber of sickness, with her light foot, her cool hand, her steady brain, and her strong heart. She teaches the orphans and the poor. She gives abundantly of her money if she has it, of her thought and time if she has not money, and helps forward good enterprises, aids the church, and serves the present age.

Now that you think of it, nobody ever calls the happy-faced, sweet-voiced, generous single woman an old maid, nor is the epithet bestowed upon her if she is a business woman, at the head of a commercial house, or the superintendent of a school. Who ever dreamed of speaking of Mary Lyon as an old maid? Who would thus designate Mary L. Booth, the dignified, thoughtful, scholarly woman who adorns one of the ablest editorial chairs in New York? Who thus thinks of Miss Britton, whose tender tones and pleading eloquence have done so much to arouse interest in zenana work in India? Who would dare mention Miss Frances E. Willard and "old maid" in the same breath? It is not necessary to multiply illustrations. Your own observation will confirm what I say, when I bid you remember that it is not the being married, or the remaining single, which insures womanly development in goodness, and womanly contentment in the home, but the doing one's duty, as unto the Lord, in

whatever station and circumstances the Lord assigns to the individual.

Few women have been more honored in authorship, and more fortunate in private and social relations, than Miss Catharine M. Sedgwick, whose books were the delight of your mothers and grandmothers. To her, on one occasion, a brother wrote as follows: "The sincere, tried, devoted affection of all the older members of the family, the tender and filial reverence and attachment of the younger, the admiration and respect of a large circle of friends, serve to bind you to that spot, and confine you within that circle, where all these blessings are enjoyed."

I am aware, as I write in this way, that many of my readers have already thought that it is pleasanter and more satisfactory to be indispensable to some one heart, than to be liked and admired by many, yet essential to none. And you are right. Wedded life, founded on mutual esteem and reciprocal love, is the best life for our sex. Let no smaller consideration enter into your calculation. Where love does not exist, there is not sufficient ground for marriage. There should never be the union of hands without the union of hearts. If you are poor in all else, you may still be rich in self-respect. Listen to none who advise you to entertain the suit of the man who does not commend himself to your instinctive regard. He may be rich, influential, and talented, but unless you can love him

truly and entirely, you will do him a wrong should you become his wife.

On the other hand, do not listen to the pleadings even of your own heart, if they whisper in behalf of one who leads an impure life. The utmost you can do for such a man, is to pray for him. If he be a gambler, a drunkard, or a libertine, do not dream the idle dream that your love and companionship will be sufficient to reform him. Only true repentance and the grace of the Lord Jesus will do that. You have a right to ask as utter a surrender of himself to you, as you give to him, in the covenant of marriage between yourself and your husband. As human nature is imperfect and sinful, there will always be room in every home for the exercise of forbearance on both sides, but there can be no good foundation for happiness where there cannot be entire confidence. You may safely determine to trust no man, however charming in manner and fine in appearance, who is a moderate drinker. Trust no man who is not a good son and brother. Trust no man who sneers at religion and scoffs at the Bible.

Do not be too certain of your own ability to judge of the man who comes to woo you. Mothers should be their daughters' closest and most confidential friends. They have the experience and the practical judgment which you lack. A young girl should listen with deference to the advice of her parents, and feel that they who have cherished her from her cradle, have

a right to offer her counsel at the time when she is about to take the most important step in life.

Romantic girls, with high-flown ideas, derived principally from sentimental novels, sometimes marry very foolishly. Once in a while the papers give us the unveiling of some sad family history, and we read, under their flaming head-lines, of Nellie, or Margery, or Sadie, the petted child of wealth, who has eloped with her father's gardener or coachman. The probabilities are that the poor girl, unfitted by the whole background of her life to be the sharer of a poor man's lot, especially unfitted to cope with hardships and privations, unused to coarse ways and rude speech, has made for her head a pillow of thorns. Whenever I hear of a silly girl who escapes to her lover from a boarding-school, or climbs over the back fence to meet him, I am convinced that there is a painful lack of refinement as well as of common sense in her character.

When the day comes for your marriage, be married honorably in the open day, from your father's house. If there are objections on the part of your parents to the lover you have chosen, and if the objections seem to you unreasonable, then wait, for one, two, three, or five years, if need be, trusting to time and patience to overcome their opposition. True love, on both sides, can afford in most cases to wait till affectionate parents are willing to consent to its wishes.

Your waiting on your parents' will is, however, a

very different thing from your obeying them in uniting yourself to a man whom your heart has not elected as its mate. A young woman should not be robbed of her own privilege of declining, if she is not won by the man who woos her.

As a rule, very long engagements are to be dreaded. They often result unhappily. The bright years which should be spent in learning to love each other better, are worse than lost, because the two grow constantly apart. A few months are enough for courtship when that is based, as it always should be, on a sufficient mutual acquaintance.

During the golden time, when the lover is all devotion, and the eyes of each are blind to the faults and foibles of the other, there should be on the part of the maiden a delicate and modest reserve, never to be overstepped. Do not suffer too great a familiarity, and do not impulsively accept caresses, which may be sweet and innocent, indeed, but which are indiscreet. We do not think that American girls need the vigilant care which is regarded as obligatory in Europe. Their own purity, their self-respect, and the good training their mothers have given them, should be their triple safeguard. But youth is impetuous, passion and temptation at times walk hand-in-hand, and the responsibility lies rather upon you, dear girls, than upon your lovers. Your own sense of what is fit and right should be to you as an invisible armor of proof.

How can two walk together unless they be agreed ?
They who are one in Christ are most entirely one.
The union that is hallowed by prayer, cemented by
trust in God, and fed by the constant service and min-
istries of consecrated affection, will be indeed blessed
from above. Such a husband and wife may say, in
the sweet words of Mrs. Lucy W. Fleming:

"We do not know, we cannot tell
What scenes may flit across life's sky ;
But yet, whate'er the future holds,
What task each hidden day unfolds,
We 'll walk together, you and I.

"We do not know, we cannot tell
What cup of joy may mantle high,
God giveth often blessed hours,
And if he crown our way with flowers,
We 'll share together, you and I.

"We do not know, ah ! who can tell ?
What blooming hopes may fade and die ;
But in life's every day of care,
The cross that falleth to our share
We 'll bear together, you and I.

"God only knows, his hand will shape
All that is hidden from the eye.
Still may our footsteps heavenward bend,
With trusting hearts, until the end ;
We 'll walk together, you and I."

CHAPTER V.

DRESS.

A YOUNG lady needs what may be called her business dress, her every-day, leisure dress, and her best dress. Of each of these she may possess a number, though I know many girls who feel that their wardrobe is very comfortably furnished if they have one good suit of each of these descriptions, all ready to be worn as occasion requires.

The business dress is the one to wear to school, if you go there daily either as teacher or pupil; to wear to the store, if you have a position as saleswoman; in general terms, to assume when you have errands out of doors. It should be neat, of as good material as your purse can buy (Shakespeare is high authority here), made without superfluous trimming, and always in repair. Girls who go about in rags and tags, with buttons off, and strings loose, and great rips in sleeves and skirts, convict themselves of mental carelessness, and lack a nice perception of the fitness of things.

I once knew a girl named Mollie, who was very elegantly attired on Sundays, and dressed in purple and fine linen when she attended a party, but at home, or on her way to market, on ordinary occasions, she

might have been taken for a very slatternly housemaid. Shoes worn down at the heel and lacking buttons, a tawdry bonnet set upon unkempt hair, and a frayed-out, spotted, greasy silk dress, which was in mourning for its better days, made up her usual garb, when simply going to perform the household errands. In the house itself, if an unexpected ring came to the door, Mollie had to fly, for she was never presentable.

A rapid process of disenchantment went on in my mind the first time I surprised the young lady in her parlor, her loose and tattered morning gown without belt or collar, her feet in worn and wretched-looking slippers, her hands and face, if you will believe me, actually sticky with molasses candy, and her eyes bent in absorbed interest on the pages of a very shallow novel. She had called upon me in state, exquisite, dainty, and radiant, and I could scarcely realize that I was awake when a servant ushered me in to meet this repulsive specimen of young ladyhood.

Do not, like poor Mollie, think that it matters little how you dress at home. It matters greatly. Sidney Smith said that a lady's whole settlement in life might, humanly speaking, turn upon the color of a bow or the shape of a bonnet. Mrs. John Hancock, the pretty Dorothy Quincy of Colonial days, said pithily that she could never forgive a girl who did not dress to please, nor pardon one who seemed pleased with her dress.

Dress should be unobtrusive, and should suit the

wearer. Your mother's dress should, all things considered, be more elegant, more costly, and more elaborately made than your own. Simplicity becomes youth, and modesty no less.

For sweeping, dusting, baking, and housework of every kind, a calico gown, short enough to avoid contact with the floor, and free from frills and furbelows, is the most suitable dress you can wear. Some ladies do their housework in old silk or cashmere dresses which have seen service in the parlor, and are too much worn for use there longer. The custom cannot be approved, for washable fabrics are certainly neater for this special purpose. For out-door business use, some one of the many serviceable worsted fabrics which are now provided is to be preferred to calico. Let the little finishing touches, the cuffs, the collars, the ties, be immaculate. No real lady will be seen in a soiled collar, or will wear a ragged one, so long as soap, water, and starch, and needles and thread, are within her reach.

Every young woman requires a thick jacket for cold weather and a thin one for warmer days, a blanket-shawl, a waterproof cloak, and two pairs of stout shoes, with a pair of rubbers. A felt or straw bonnet or hat, plainly trimmed, and a dark veil for windy days, complete one's attire for the street.

You may think it costs a great deal of money to procure so many wraps. Well, the money some peo-

ple waste on perishable ruffles and ribbons, on chocolate caramels and ten-cent story-books, would easily suffice to clothe them as comfortably and sensibly and safely as every lady should be clothed.

I often see young girls behind counters for whom my heart aches. The attempts at fine dressing displayed in their costumes, the efforts to imitate in cheap materials the splendor of rich women who come to do their shopping in velvets and satins, are pitiful. It is in good taste for the wealthy, remembering the impression they make on their poorer sisters, to refrain from trailing their best garments on the floors of city stores. Business dresses, for the lofty and the lowly alike, should be inconspicuous. When Princess Louise goes to walk in Ottawa, her street suit is stout, dark, and serviceable; and our President's wife, Mrs. Hayes, has set a good example to the whole country in her continual quiet protest against vulgar display.

Dress for special times should be more ornamental and of costlier material than on common occasions. But do not deprive yourself of the opportunity to meet agreeable people, to see fine pictures, to hear sweet music, and to obtain the culture which is only to be found by mingling in society, because you must wear one dress repeatedly. Probably nobody will give a second thought to your costume; and if it be sufficiently in style not to challenge attention, if it fit you nicely, and you wear it with a smiling, happy face, it will an-

swer every requirement. A good black or dark-colored silk, or, if that be too costly, a good black cashmere, neatly made, with lace at your neck and wrists, is dress enough for almost any occasion to which a young girl is likely to be invited.

The habit of dressing in the afternoon, when no visitors are looked for, and only father and the boys will see the extra touches, is one which you should acquire. Always, when the day's work is put by and the afternoon's leisure has arrived, make a fresh toilet. The cool water on face and hands, the nicely-combed hair, and the rest and refreshment the little change brings, are worth all the trouble they cost. Sometimes, if you are in a depressed mood, and the day is dark and rainy, it will cheer you and elevate your spirits if you will put on a bright ribbon and a favorite dress, and thus adopt the raiment of gayety, though the state of your mind may not entirely correspond with it.

Reading lately a very interesting description of life in Canton, by an English lady who spent some months there, I was struck by the contrasts between the dress of ladies in the Celestial Empire and our own. With the poor little deformed feet of the Chinese ladies, pictures have doubtless made you familiar. No such extreme of torture, of course, could be tolerated by us; but do we not foolishly compress our feet into shoes too narrow and too short, with pointed heels which

destroy all grace? and are we not unwise in thus impeding our freedom of movement and ruining the beauty of the foot, which was given us for use and comfort, and not for mere show?

White is the recognized deep mourning in China, and it must be of cotton, and austere plain. Blue is likewise worn by those in sorrow, answering to our lighter mourning of lilac and gray. All jewelry and ornament are prohibited to those in bereavement.

I would like to use my influence with you who are growing up, against the wearing of the gloomy black robes and the unwholesome, swathing crape in which we Christians envelop ourselves when God has sent his messenger to our beloved ones and called them home. Unlike the heathens in the Flowery Land, the most sombre and the saddest hues symbolize our feelings when we weep for our dead. Yet if we can be sure that they are only gone a little sooner to rest in the very presence of the Master, that they are for ever free from sorrow and pain and trouble, we shall see that our grief should be mingled with gladness. We ought not to write ourselves desolate, but rather to look with hopeful eyes to the swiftly-coming day when we, too, shall receive an arrow sharpened with love, let in sweetly, and ascend unto Him who bought us with his precious blood.

Young girls will of course defer to the wishes of their parents in the clothing they wear in seasons of

affliction, and at all times. Still, many of you have much liberty of choice, and to all there will gradually arrive a period when you will make decisions of your own, and regulate your own attire. Do not, then, become the slaves of fashion. If you feel that you are more contented in adopting a mourning garb when you lose dear friends, let it not be ostentatious in its costliness, if only for the sake of the innumerable poor who will spend their last penny, and perhaps incur debts, in their emulation of you. Do not endanger your eyesight by going about shrouded from head to foot in thick veils impervious to light and air.

The best way to remember our dead is to carry forward the labors of love they began, to be thankful for the sweetness of the years when they were here, and for their sakes to be gentler, kinder, more tender and more patient with the living who tarry with us still. It is well to embellish the grave, and to lay fresh flowers above the sleeping-place of our darlings, but it is better to make the days bright and sunny for the little children, for the middle-aged, and the old, who still claim our friendly offices.

Whatever dress you wear in a sick-chamber—and more or less most of us are called upon to care for the sick—in our homes, let it be one that will not rustle. No stiff silk, no creaking shoe, no rough, obtrusive garment should be worn by the nurse. Soft woollen or flannel dresses and noiseless slippers are appropri-

ate there, for the good nurse is quiet, without seeming to try to be so.

If you ever take upon you the duty of visiting among the poor, do not make the mistake which some do of going in the oldest and dingiest things you can find. Wear nice clothing. The people you visit will appreciate the compliment you pay them. In teaching mission scholars, while your dress should be simple, see that it is neat and attractive.

A lady who had taught in mission schools in several great cities, among others, San Francisco, Chicago, and New York, told me that she invariably wore the prettiest neck-ribbon she could when she went among her worst classes. She said, "There is more than the unthinking imagine in presenting a winning appearance to these girls who have so little in their lives to make them happy. It helps to educate them."

A love of dress has been the ruin of many a poor woman who, to gratify it, has bartered her peace and her honor. It is the duty of all good women to elevate the standard of thought on this subject. We must, by neither precept nor example, lift our clothing from its subordinate place of convenience and comfortableness into the place of supreme importance. We must not devote too much time to the stitching, seaming, and embroidering of garments which are soon to perish and pass away. "Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?"

Above all, our dress must conform to our means. To owe money for dresses which we are wearing, to be in debt to dressmakers and milliners, to defraud poor and needy sewing-women of their well-earned wages, is to sink beneath the contempt of all honest persons.

Much evil is wrought by want of thought; and of all want of thought, *that* seems to me most cruel and least excusable which keeps back well-earned money from those who have toiled to receive it. A day's, a week's waiting, may seriously incommode the seamstress who saves her rent up dollar by dollar. Far better any self-denial and any doing without than the wilful acceptance of debt. Never buy what you cannot pay for on the spot, if you would enjoy daily and nightly ease of mind.

CHAPTER VI.

ON PAYING YOUR WAY.

ONE of the finest qualities which a gentlewoman can possess is an honestly independent spirit. The pretty, poetical conceit of the vine pleases us when we hear it applied to womanhood, because we like to think of woman as soft and tender and clinging. Yet if such be a woman's only or even chief attributes, her charms will grow monotonous. The prettiest, the sweetest, the most delicately refined of you all will be happier and more fondly loved if you can walk on your own feet, than if you go through life making a crutch of the most convenient arm.

None of us can afford to be entirely independent of others. Our kindred and friends, our daily associates, even the chance companions of a visit or a journey, have interests which are twisted and woven into the very threads of our being. That would be a meagre, starved, and unproductive life, which neither took nor gave, receiving no stores from others' wealth, and returning no overflow of gratitude and helpfulness.

But the sort of woman who sets out to be the clinging dependant, intent on being taken care of, fed of the finest of the wheat, clothed in silken attire, helped over

all the rough places, and generally preferred because of her inefficiency and selfishness, is a parasite and a poison-vine. God pity the homes wherein such women dwell.

I know a number of women whose lives seem, to themselves and their friends, to be failures. Some, fettered by fretful invalidism, spend hours of every week stretched upon lounges, from which the resolute endeavor to seek health by exercise in fresh air and sunlight would probably deliver them. Others, having no means of their own, deliberately say, like the unfaithful steward in the parable, "I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed." They prefer to remain members of families which would be happier and more peaceable without them. One or two have fettered the hands of kind and unselfish brothers, preventing them from marrying because they felt that they must keep for their sisters the luxury and the ease to which they had been accustomed.

I hope the girls who are now growing up to take the places of those who are gradually acknowledging the on-creeping power of time, will be above such selfishness as this. There is no surer way of providing for contentment and honor in middle-age than in youth to acquire some art, or study for some profession, or learn some trade, which shall be in request in the world's market. Do not feel that there is anything humiliating in performing good work for good wages. The laborer

is worthy of his hire, and the skilled laborer can usually command his price.

Very often it is a girl's plain duty to remain at home, at leisure, gently filling in the little spaces as only a dear daughter can, lifting the weight of care from her mother, slipping in a soft word or a smile where it is like oil on the troubled waters of a child's transient naughtiness, reading to her grandmother, whose eyes begin to grow dim, writing letters for father, and beautifying the house with the cunning work of her brush or her needle. She who rebels at this sort of existence as too humdrum, too barren and too narrow, may be simply a sentimental egotist whose principal object in life is herself. A young girl whose father and mother are generous and affectionate, and who only ask of her, in return for all they do, her love and cheery presence, ought to think deeply and earnestly before determining to set out in life for herself, as it is right and natural that her brother should. The safe shelter of her childhood's home is the pleasantest and the fairest environment for her while she is still young, and her life, like an unread book, is all before her.

There are many girls, however, who must at an early age add something to the home income; and there are many who will find it necessary always to take care of themselves. The inquiry arises, and is pertinent to such, What can you do?

What have you learned, so thoroughly and so well, that you can practise it, and receive adequate remuneration in return? Are you, for instance, a thoroughly competent housekeeper? Are you a good cook? Every woman ought to learn cooking, and ought to consider it as essential a part of her education as reading and writing. It is far too commonly abandoned to ignorant and stupid servants, and the result is that we are pale, nervous, and dyspeptic, as a nation, while the land teems with plenty, the harvests are abundant, and the markets are stocked with the choicest fare. Learn to cook, whatever else you fail to learn. Learn, too, to wash, to iron, to do fine fluting, to sew, to cut out, to paint pictures, to draw designs, in short, to use your two hands as tools, as instruments, and as servants to attend on the orders of your brain.

If you have had exceptional advantages for securing a good education, have you made the best of them? Have you mastered any exact science? Do you so understand any language, other than your own, that you can teach it, read it, or translate with facility. Have you spent years on music, and can you play, at sight, the beautiful compositions which carry the listeners along their deep currents, as voyagers are borne on the tides of grand rivers? Could you become the organist of a church, or has your voice been so trained that it could lead the songs of a congregation?

If there is no one thing for which you are fitted, I pray you, lose no more time, but begin to-day to study conscientiously and faithfully something which will enable you to earn your own support, if the day shall come when you have to do so.

In a lovely little cottage, embowered among roses and hidden behind sheltering elms and maples, I last summer made the acquaintance of a family whom I hold in high esteem. There was a bright young daughter, graceful, dignified and winsome, who wanted to find some fitting work away from home. She felt that she was not really needed there, and that she did not wish to burden her parents, but rather to assist them. She was undecided first what to do. Not long ago, she came to see me, and I found that she had solved her problem by entering a training school for nurses, where in a two years' course she would learn how to take intelligent care of the sick, graduating from the school with a diploma which would be a testimonial of her competence. Often, as I see young girls who go about their beautiful homes morbid, dissatisfied, and wearing the air of martyrs, I think of this brave little lady, and conclude that there would be less imagined unhappiness among young women, if there were more courage, more self-abnegation, and more resolute common sense in the average young womanly character.

If you are rich and well-to-do, you have a certain

advantage over those who are poor. They must do what they can. You may do what you will. A poor girl cannot look around her and say, "There is this work which invites me, and which I should enjoy. I will prepare myself to enter upon it." She must do whatever comes first to hand, whether or not it be agreeable, and accept what money she can get. On the other hand, the young woman who is now comfortably established may take her time, and arm herself against the day of necessity by acquiring some useful art or accomplishment.

What a pity it is to live in a world where so many hearts are aching, in which so many burdens must be borne, and in which there is always so much for willing hands to do, and to live churlishly, meanly, and selfishly. What a pity to lose the sweet opportunities of blessing others which are in every day, if only we have eyes to look for them. What a pity to cultivate a cynical satirical disposition. Every little while I hear such a comment as this, made upon somebody who alienates instead of pleasing people: "There is that disagreeable Miss —, let us get out of her way. She is so sharp and critical, she will be sure to find fault with us." It is not well to harden, to take the narrowest view of things, to crystallize too early. The cheery, buoyant, bright, glad, suggestive girls, who bring the morning and the sunshine into the room, who carry with them the tonic and the cordial of a brisk breeze, are the

girls who have their hearts and hands full, and who know that they are of use. They have found their place, and are occupying it.

Pay your way. Pay it in kindness, in courtesies, in pleasant chat, and by contributing to the enjoyment of others. Do not be selfish. Do not plume yourself on some pitiful bit of affectation which you are christening diffidence or modesty. Do not stand wishing for some grand opportunity, while a thousand little ones glide by unimproved. I never hear people saying how much they would do for the poor and the friendless, if they were rich, influential, gifted, or at leisure, without a fear that they are self-deceived. The measure of what one would do if one could, is the measure of what one is doing now.

It is no small thing to be the joy of the domestic circle, the one whose soft touch or gentle word averts disturbance, heals wounds, dispels estrangement, conciliates the offended, harmonizes the uncongenial, and makes peace to be the household atmosphere. It is no small gift to possess the happy tact which makes people pleased with themselves, and urges them to do and be their best. The young girl who is gifted with this grace of touch, this swiftness of sympathy, this captivating self-forgetfulness, may not have a fair face, nor a trim figure, but she will be dowered with a charm more affluent than either, and there will be no question about her paying her way.

This particular kind of paying the way may be very soothing to some persons who, naturally of a sturdy and independent nature, are in the providence of God placed where they must be, for a while, dependent. Under such circumstances, is it right to be morbid, morose, and unthankful, making everybody wretched on one's account? There are times and places in life where it is as clearly one's duty to depend, as in other cases to be independent. If God puts you where **you** cannot possibly help yourself, or if you have done everything you possibly can to that **end**, and in vain, then accept the help he sends, and do not fret; help yourself with both hands if you can, with one hand if only one is free, but if both are folded or fettered, find out what the poet means by his noble line, "They also serve, who only stand and wait." Do not fret. In the Sermon on the Mount our Lord tells us, over and over, that we must take no anxious thought concerning the morrow.

There are some quite commonplace bits of advice about paying one's way, which you should not overlook. The honest person keeps out of debt, and is prompt in returning small obligations, even to postage stamps, or the odd cent in **change**. She will not purchase the bonnet or the feather that she cannot afford, simply because it is in style and her friend has one she admires. She is ashamed of no frugality, so that she preserves her own self-respect. She abhors bor-

rowed finery, and wears her own gloves and shoes, not her obliging mother's or sister's. She is considerate in paying all work-people, not the lowest amount they will consent to take, but the highest she can afford to give, in accordance with the service rendered. She is just, generous, and responsible in her intercourse with others.

CHAPTER VII.

PEN, INK, AND PAPER.

MORE girls than the uninitiated dream of are possessed of literary aspirations, and entertain hopes of entering upon the path of authorship. We are a nation of readers, and the number of our writers is legion. The mails are burdened and the newspaper offices are besieged by bundles of manuscript, the supply called forth by a never-ceasing demand. To a well-taught young lady, on whom nature has bestowed a vocabulary, who has had access to books and to intelligent society, whose fancy is lively, on whom rests the happy faculty of idealization, it seems the obvious thing to write. Conscious of talents, shall she hide them in the folded napkin of silence? Sensible that she carries about with her fire and flame that ought to shine like beacons, shall she screen them under the bushel of obscurity?

She has had her little triumphs. She has already sent to this or that village paper her daintily-copied rhymes, signed Stella or Rosebud, and they have been duly printed, with admiring comments from the editor's pen. Her friends too, rejoice to hear everything which

Hours with Gilda.

she writes, and she has not learned to feel distrust of their appreciation. Yet, poor child! the indiscriminate praise of sincerely sympathetic criticism has been the seed-corn of keen pain and bitter disappointment in many a young heart's experience.

To people who have never tried to write anything more pretentious than letters of business or friendship, and those, perhaps, seldom, it is always surprising that others can write fluently upon selected themes. Many bright talkers are hampered by the pen, and they envy those who use it with ease. There are still many neighborhoods where a hint that you are a poetess insures you an extra lump of sugar in your tea, and imparts a delicious flavor of compliment to the half-hesitating request you receive for a stanza in Jennie's autograph album.

Not for fame only, that shining will-o'-the-wisp which allures the ardent soul of the youthful student, but for money many girls desire to write. This is a praiseworthy motive, and no matter what the sentimental may say about it, some excellent literary work is done with the object of earning a livelihood, and would never have been done had the worker been born to fortune. Inspiration is essential to the most delicate efflorescence of genius; but Harriet Martineau and Charles Dickens each testified that regularity and industry were, in the long run, as serviceable. Many a bright little article and many a sweet little song had its

primary inspiration, alas, in the writer's need of a pair of shoes, in the fact that the scoop scraped the bottom of the flour-barrel.

Do not allow yourself, dear youthful aspirant, to think that golden gains are to be won by the multitude in this well-tilled and crowded field. I know of no life so full of drudgery, no life so little and so slowly remunerative, and no life so full of strife and competition, as that of women engaged in literature and dependent on occasional contributions to the columns of papers and magazines. The exceptional few who have salaried positions, or who are adepts in some one line, very possibly a mechanical one, may earn enough to support them modestly. They nearly always find it necessary to supplement their salaries by additional work if they have, as many women do, dear relatives looking to them for assistance. Once in a great while a successful venture in novel-writing brings fame and fortune to the happy haven whence it was launched.

But it is a blessed thing for youth that it believes in itself, and is undaunted when it hears of the failures of others. Each novice, as she drops her first tremulous notes, fancies that she shall one day wear the singing-robes of Mrs. Browning or Mrs. Hemans.

"Somewhere there is something sweet,
And some time I shall know.
There is a land close by,
A land in reach of my arm ;

It is mine from shore to sea.
There the nightingales do fly ;
There the flush of the rose is warm.
I shall take it by-and-by."

This is the unspoken conviction of the young girl as she writes her first story and sends it afar off into the great unknown sea where sail so many ships. All alone she slips out of the house, drops her precious parcel into the letter-box, says nothing about it at home, keeps it to herself, a sacred and tender mystery. And then she watches and waits, day by day listening for the postman's rap, hoping for acceptance, chokingly disappointed and curiously ashamed if he hand in, probably before the eyes of the assembled family, the big yellow envelope, with its bulky contents. That curt "Returned with thanks" of the editor, how it cuts its way through wounded vanity, and sometimes through real merit, like a sharp, pitiless knife.

I confess to a very great tenderness for these sheets of paper covered with the chirography of girlhood. They were written afternoons, when the work was done, in little white-draped rooms, with leaf-shadows dancing on the floor, and robin preludes blending with the melody of the pure thoughts. How crude they are, how little original, how transparently they reveal the books the writer has been reading, and how innocently they echo the style of her favorite poet. How small their knowledge of real life, and how unsparing

their judgment of what they do not understand. Very often they possess genuine merit, and there is in them the promise of good work ; but before that can be accomplished, there must be patient acceptance of hope deferred, itself a kindly discipline, earnest study of the best models, and laborious pruning and condensing. Easy reading has not always been easy writing, and too great spontaneity often induces a fatal facility.

Editors are, as a rule, very amiable and long-suffering beings. They are fenced in by limitations, which are conveniently described by the term *available*. The consideration is with them a mercantile one merely, and they cannot expend sentiment in accepting or declining what is offered for their columns. If they do not want your sugar, your salt, your potatoes, they say so, and you are at liberty to offer them elsewhere. When you take your wares to them, remember that they are only wares. You should not embarrass them by saying that you are in poverty. Newspapers and publishing houses are not charitable institutions, contrived to aid genius in distress. They cannot help it, and it is not their business, though you may have changed your last dollar to buy the stamps for your letter, or to pay the car-fare to their office. Your womanly desire to assist your parents, or to educate your brother, or to procure for yourself a library, cannot be allowed to weigh with them in their judgment of your manuscript.

Nor can you claim any special deference by right of your sex. "Is there no place here for a lady to sit down?" indignantly asked a young woman who had entered the office of a New York daily paper at the most hurried hour of the day. Why should there have been, pray? Ladies often behave as though they expected to be treated with chivalrous courtesy because they have undertaken an artistic or literary career. The fact is, that they have no right to any special regard based on the notion that they are women. They ought to divest themselves of the thought that they are the objects in any way of the admiration or the instinctive gallantry of gentlemen when they compete with them in any legitimate work. A fair field and no favor is what they should ask; and the higher education now open to women should make them too independent to claim anything by right of their fragility, their grace, or their pretty looks.

Having said this, it is right to observe that the busy printing-presses of the age are for ever crying, "Give, give." Of making many books there is no end. You, as well as others, may find your vocation in helping to make them. Millions of words are wanted by the little types, and a word fitly spoken is always like an apple of gold in a picture of silver. If you have anything to say, say it as brightly, as forcibly, and as briefly as you can, and send it, with your address plainly written, and the stamps for its return, to the editor of your choice.

If he return it, and your faith fail not, buy more stamps, and send it elsewhere. But do not think there is anything personal in the rejection which is almost certain to overtake your first venture. Pluck, practice, and persistence, are the three Ps of which every writer, young or old, needs plenty. Do not forget that what you have prepared, in the fragments of your time, and with little skill, must enter into competition, not with its own kind only, but with the work of many trained hands. Literature is an exacting mistress, and a long apprenticeship must be served to her, as to other arts and professions. Untold mischief has been done by some popular novels, in which beautiful heroines, with hair trailing as they walk, achieve wealth and distinction before they are twenty. Experience and perseverance count for more than dimples and complexion in the writing of books.

If you do decide to use pen, ink, and paper for the great hungry public, attend to several humble adjuncts. Use good paper, smooth and white, and cut into sheets about the size of commercial note. Write legibly. Spell and punctuate correctly. Use ink of a decided color, and write on only one side of the paper. Do not neglect other and evident duties that you may write; but when you write, have it before you as an object, definite and clear, to make homes happier, to cheer the desponding, and to make the world better and brighter.

CHAPTER VIII.

LETTER-WRITING.

THERE is a beautiful, helpful, and most womanly use of the pen, which is within the reach of every one of you. You can all write letters. If there be one who thinks she cannot, then she has a mistaken idea of what a letter really is. When families are, in the course of events, separated, their scattered members keep most closely bound, and their diverse interests are best united, by a frequent interchange of correspondence. When your home is in a remote nook of the mountains, or by some lovely inland river, and you wish a new dress or bonnet or book or piece of furniture from the city, a letter or two will arrange the transaction as satisfactorily as a personal visit could. Nobody will plead inability to write this particular style of letter, and nobody will admit that she cannot write to an absent sister or cousin, and tell the household current history. I am not pleading for these ordinary letters at all, but for a revival of the old fashion of graceful, careful, and elegant correspondence between friends; for letters which shall convey something of the writer's heart, and which shall be worth keeping and reading when the writer's hand is dust.

What is a letter? It is simply a conversation, or rather a monologue, committed to paper, and endowed with somewhat of permanence. There will be varying shades of thought and differences of manner in the letters you address to different friends, even as there would be differences and varieties in your talk with different people.

It is proper at times to maintain dignity and reserve in your letter-writing; a flavor of formality is not objectionable. The fault of the age is to be too dashing, too hap-hazard, and too free and easy.

Then, again, a letter may be gossipy, garrulous, filled with trifling detail, and sparkling with mirth. It should reflect the mood of the hour, and express the mind of the writer. It should never be stilted, affected, or conceited, neither florid and involved, nor bombastic and inflated.

A letter of business, addressed to a person of affairs, should be studiously brief. It should say every essential word on the subject in hand, and not one word more. It should have nothing superfluous in the way of preamble. Plunge at once, without preliminaries, into the topic under consideration, and leave off the moment you are done.

A letter to your relatives, or your intimate friends, may be as discursive, as extended, and as informal as you please. It may relate at any length the homeliest every-day happenings, the drolleries of the household,

the witticisms of the breakfast-table, and the plans and occupations of those about you. It should be a leaf out of your own life, with the hues fresh and unfaded, a bit of yourself freely given to one in whom you are not afraid to confide. It should be you, not as they know you who meet you only in society, in a surface-way, but you, as father and mother, brothers and sisters, and your intimate acquaintances have found you out.

Premising that your letters are a recognized part of your life, I would urge you to devote some time every week to writing them. It is well to touch life at many points. It is desirable to have many threads binding you to homes and circumstances other than your own. To use the happy phrase of Mrs. Whitney, you need "outings." It is sweet to have a pure, consecrated, interior experience of your own; but there is always the danger of growing narrow and selfish, if you remain too exclusively in your own home, or dwell too constantly on one set of feelings and thoughts. We should strive to widen the sphere of our sympathies, and to love many rather than few.

"Wherever in the world I am,
In whatsoe'er estate,
I have a fellowship with hearts
To keep and cultivate,
And a work of lowly love to do
For the Lord on whom I wait."

Politeness requires that every letter shall be answered. As it is easier to answer a letter when the

glow of having received it is fresh, and you feel as though space were annihilated and you were near your correspondent, it is a good plan to reply to all letters promptly.

Postal cards are convenient for those who are in haste, but too often they do away with the sweet, full, long letters which women have always found pleasure in writing. Who can make love, or tenderly chide, or tell of anxiety relieved, sorrow soothed, or gratitude awakened, on a postal? The pretty, flat card was never intended for these purposes, indeed; but there it is—so handy, so easily to be seized in a moment of haste, and a quick pen can so swiftly dash off the bare facts, that the barn took fire last night, the horse became lame, or Aunt Patty's new dress is deficient by a quarter of a yard. On the narrow margin left, a reference can be inserted, telling of father's rheumatism, or the baby's croup. And then, crowded away up in a corner, comes the "Love to all." The card once sent, conscience ceases to be troublesome, and its monotonous, "Write to Susie," "Write to Lillie," is heard faintly, if it do not entirely cease. You have sent the card, and you will soon send the long letter. The long letter will be sent when the Sunday-school picnic and the camp-meeting are over, when your new suit is finished, and the peaches are canned, and a number of other things are done.

Deferring a letter is like the forgetting to return an

umbrella. The longer one neglects it, the longer one will do so. A great many charming friendships are gradually dissolved, home ties are weakened on the part of the absent, and those who love each other drift apart, through the indolence which looks on letter-writing as burdensome, and the discourtesy which does not attend to it promptly.

The busiest people are usually less fluent in finding reasons for this special neglect than the idlers. Ma-caulay, in his brilliant Parliamentary career, when engagements were crowding upon him and he had enough responsibility to fill the hands of two or three men, never failed to write delightful epistles to his sisters. They are so gay, so witty, and so wise, that they fairly illuminate the pages of his memoir. The letters of Miss Sedgwick are models of style. But why do I specify hers, except on the ground that they are the latest I have read? Some of the finest contributions from women to polite literature are in the form of letters. You will think of Madame Swetchine, of Eugénie de Guénin, of Madame de Sévigné, of Lucy Aikin, and of others whose correspondence possessed a charm which is like the perfume of roses, abiding and sweet. Their letters were not written hurriedly, nor regarded as of secondary importance, but they paid their correspondents the compliment of taking pains.

There is one use of the pen which must commend itself to you if you wish to serve the Master. Perhaps

you are sometimes too timid to say the word for Jesus which is in your heart, but can you not write it? Can you not slip the little note into the book you lend your friend, weaving in with its loving thought of her, a loving thought of Him who died for you both? Can you not write a letter to the absent Sunday scholar, inviting her to give the dew of her childhood to the Lord? Nobody will be hurt or offended by such letters as these, if they are written in the right spirit, and sent forth with prayer that they may be blessed. We are too prone to be silent about the things of the heavenly kingdom. It would help us thitherward, if we but looked daily to the city of God, as the end of our journeying; and we should be stimulated and strengthened if we communed together by the way.

Write letters to kindred, to friends, to dear children, to servants who have a claim on your remembrance when you are away from home, and to those who are in any way subject to your influence. Let no week go by, without at least one letter being sent out to do its sweet work for Christ. To comfort the bereaved, to reprove the wandering, to crown the joy of the happy, and to entertain some dear invalid, shut in from active duty, what so potential as a letter!

Now suffer a bit of advice about the mechanism of the letter. Always, except to your very dearest and nearest, sign your full name. Girls write so much alike, now that penmanship is taught according to system,

that if your correspondent receives many letters, she may be at a loss at once to identify you by the Nettie, or Nina, or Nellie, which is the pet home name you bear. It is, I think, more dignified to write one's Christian name without a diminutive on most occasions. One never sees a young man undertaking enterprises, graduating, or doing anything worth while, as Johnnie or Benny. Why should his sister be Jennie or Maggie, away from the fireside.

Always fully prepay the postage on your letter, and if it be on your own affairs, and require an answer, enclose return stamps. This little matter is often neglected through inadvertence, but it is imperative in its propriety.

It is not kind to write letters out of forlorn and morbid and sorrowful moods, sending them forth to darken friendly hearts with their shadow when it may have passed from you, and you may be dwelling in the sunlight. Let your letters be uncomplaining, cheerful, and tranquil, and do not write when the gloom is upon you. It is wrong to add a feather's weight to the load which some affectionate spirit has to bear.

Nor is it in good taste to fill a whole page with apologies and excuses. They are very uninteresting reading. Do not cross your letter, nor write illegibly. The last fault is particularly an offence against good manners. Never write when you are vexed or angered, lest you say what your cooler judgment may not

approve; and while a spoken word may be recalled or explained, a written one remains, to testify to your mistaken haste. Indiscreet letters have ended friendships which have grown and flourished through the changes of years.

Nor should you under any circumstances ever stoop to a clandestine correspondence, or write to any one whom your parents and friends regard with suspicion. Be above indirection, and never at any period of life carry on a secret flirtation, or engage in anything which requires to be concealed.

Some of us would be mortified, were the sentimentality of youthful days, innocent though it may have been, remorselessly exposed in print. It is as well to refrain from exaggerations, even in our moments of love and confidence. Life should be sincere and dignified.

People, of course, like to open their own correspondence. The charm would be taken from the tenderest letter, were other eyes than our own to dwell upon it first. We ought to remember this with regard to children. I have seen a little face clouded, and bright eyes dimmed with tears, when mother or sister has thoughtlessly opened the note which came to Ethel or Grace. If we desire to induce in the young a constant consideration for the rights of others, we shall do it best by keeping fast by the golden rule.

CHAPTER IX.

HOSPITALITY.

ONE of the pleasantest things about a home of one's own is this: that it gives one an opportunity to exercise hospitality. The burdens of life are so many, and the state of domestic service is often so unsatisfactory, that some families shrink from inviting guests, because they feel that guests add to their cares. On the other hand, some households are never alone. A tide of company ebbs and flows through them at all seasons, and people are for ever going and coming.

To either of these extremes a happy medium is to be preferred. We should be glad if we have kindred and friends who can often come under our roof, sit at our table, and bless us with their presence. We should not repine if we have seasons of being alone, with only our own dear ones to make up the circle. In the plan of our home-life hospitality should be included, and we ought not selfishly to determine that we will live with closed doors. But we must not forget that in all high living and deep thinking, there must be a margin for solitude too.

When you invite guests to visit you, it is right that you should prepare the chamber and decorate the

parlor in their honor. It is only right that the viands on the table should be of the choicest, and most dantly served. But you should not oppress your friend with attention, nor embarrass her with service. Let her feel at home, not by treating her with rude discourtesy or unceremonious neglect, but by seeing that provision is made for her comfort, that she is freely allowed to do the things she likes best, and that she is not restricted and fatigued by unnecessary formalities.

Consult her tastes as to the style of entertainments she most enjoys. Nowhere is the room for the exercise of a fine tact more easily conspicuous than here. It is well to put your own pressing work aside, so that you can be at leisure to sit and go out with your friend; and yet you should never allude to this, nor make a merit of it, nor speak as though her being with you obliged you to deviate greatly from your ordinary modes of action.

When friends come to your house unexpectedly, and at hours which are perhaps inconvenient, if you care truly for them you will not be fretful or distressed at the interruption of your engagements. Who knows but the very best and happiest thing for you is folded, like the perfume in the flower's petals, in what your friend shall say? The day may be enriched by her entrance upon it. Some wise word may drop from her lips, which shall help you over a hard place to-morrow. Some drollery of hers may oil the home machinery,

Hours with Girls.

and keep it from friction. Or, instead of receiving, yours may be the more blessed privilege of giving some strength and joy.

If you receive life's interruptions in the right spirit and temper, they will prove to be sweet and gracious benedictions. Remember the lesson in Keble's hymn, which, though oft repeated, can never be too deeply taken to heart.

"If, on our daily course, our mind
Be set to hallow all we find,
New treasures still, of countless price,
God will provide for sacrifice.

"Old friends, old scenes, will lovelier be,
As more of heaven in each we see ;
Some softening gleam of love and prayer
Shall dawn on every cross and care.

"The trivial round, the common task,
Would furnish all we ought to ask :
Room to deny ourselves ; a road
To bring us, daily, nearer God."

There are some little ways in which a daughter at home can relieve her mother of needless care, and one of them is the duty attending to the appointments of the dining-room and table. You may not have fine and costly linen or rare and exquisite china and glass. Solid silver, or even elegant plated-ware, may be beyond your means. But what you have may be perfect

of its kind, or as nearly so as practicable under the circumstances. You should try to have a spotless tablecloth and clean napkins, folded in the same creases and free from wrinkles.

Just here a caution. If in your household there is one younger or older who is awkward or infirm, and has a really incurable habit of overturning a teacup or the vinegar cruet, or spilling orange-juice or gravy on the cloth, and thereby taxing your forbearance by wounding your housewifely pride and love of neatness, you have need for special watchfulness and prayer that you may not be hurried into sin on these trying occasions, and also for the exercise of a little prudence and contrivance that you may as far as possible avert them. Above all, do not let the spots on the cloth provoke you to sharp words which will cut into the sad and loving heart of the irresponsible offender, and leave on your own soul a stain darker than that on the tablecloth. It is a good plan to double a large napkin and spread it at the place of the person who is constantly transgressing against neatness, and also to see that the place itself is as favorable as possible for the avoidance of such mishaps. The napkin, if spotted, can be more easily cleansed than the cloth, which will often, though not invariably, be in this manner protected from injury. Accidents to the tablecloth, like all the occurrences of our daily lives, afford an opportunity for glorifying God, and may be made a means

of grace to ourselves and others. Of course those under authority should be taught carefulness in this as in other respects.

Your dishes may, in most cases, be whole, and your food, though plain, may be well cooked and agreeably served. If your mother is too busy with her numerous occupations to look after the minor matters of the table, such as seeing that the cruetts are supplied, the salt-cellar evenly filled, the mustard fresh, and the sugar-bowls replenished, it will be a help to her to have you take all thought for these little things entirely from her mind. Whatever you do undertake, do not shirk it, but let its responsibility rest on you, and let others feel that you may be depended upon.

The ordinary home table ought to be nice enough, at any time, to invite the presence of a guest who has happened in. Nor should you suffer in your own mind a single doubt as to the fitness of the entertainment. Let your welcome, at least, be full of cordiality.

It requires almost as much tact to visit agreeably as to entertain successfully. The young girl who is going away from home should, so far as possible, accommodate herself to the ways of her friend's house. It is not mannerly, to use an old-fashioned phrase, to keep breakfast waiting, to be late at prayers or absent from them, to linger at a picture-gallery or the park so that you delay the dinner, disconcert your hostess, and vex the servants. One should give no extra trou-

ble when one is received into the inner heart and life of another's home.

If you will pardon the suggestion, you will be fastidious in the care you take of your friend's pretty guest-chamber while you stay therein. The lovely little mats, the rarely beautiful touches here and there, the handsome furniture, and the soft carpet, should none of them be abused. Keep the room in good order, hang your dress in the closet, and when you return from a walk or drive put your wrappings, not on the bed or a chair, but in the proper and provided place for them.

Be obliging, but do not be obtrusive. If you can be of use, and your assistance in any department of housekeeping is acceptable, you will not refrain from giving it; but nothing is more annoying than offers of service which is not desired. Your own good sense must be your guide, and should be a safe and sufficient one.

Do not monopolize the easiest seats and the warmest corners, nor take for your own use the chair in which some aged person is accustomed to sit. Be pleased with whatever is done for you, and show your pleasure.

Be at the pains to have a little work of your own, or an interesting book, to which you can resort at hours when the family are engaged in their necessary work. Please remember that what they plan for your

enjoyment, it is imperative upon you to endeavor to enjoy.

The dearest guest may make the mistake of staying too long and wearing out her welcome. It is always well to go before your friends' feel in the least weary of you.

CHAPTER X.

THE GATE OF THE LIPS.

THE highest style of conversation is indicated by the apostle, who talks of the duty of speaking the truth in love. So much of human happiness and so much of human misery depend upon the right use of the tongue, that I think we cannot do better than make up our minds what is the law which for us shall open and shut the gate of the lips. The Bible is full of commands, reproofs, hints, suggestions, and illustrations, on this subject. In the Psalms, the tongue is synonymous with the glory of man, since by it he is enabled to praise God. The strong expression, "scourge," is used by one of Job's friends in speaking of the tongue: "Thou shalt be delivered from the scourge of the tongue." Solomon declares his horror and dislike of those who brawl and quarrel. James, in far later days, speaks of the tongue as "a fire, a world of iniquity."

We are told that by our words we shall be justified, and by our words condemned; and there is a distinct assertion that for every idle word we shall one day give an account. So it is the part of wisdom to be careful in our speech.

Nothing is stronger in its power, either for helping or hurting, than a word. Gentle, kind, affectionate words are never lost. They give a forward impulse to good deeds, and they are passed along, like coins that have a golden value. Harsh, censorious, and malicious words are passed along too, and they are like thistle-seed scattered by the wayside and caught up by the wind; one cannot gather them up nor explain them away. Untruthful, slanderous, and wicked words, are emissaries of the evil one, and they do his work in a world of sorrow and shame.

It is not necessary that our daily talk should never touch upon persons and personal affairs, in order to be free from the leaven of unkindness. There is a great deal of gossip which is friendly, innocent, and commendable, and the word itself had originally this sense; but in the imperfection of the common practice it has by degrees deteriorated, so that now when we hear it we at once think of light and trivial speculations, and the retailing of odds and ends about our neighbors which do not in the least concern us. It is quite right that we should be pleased with the good fortune of those we know, and that little congratulatory observations should go from one to another when a member of our circle arrives at distinction, receives a prize, or does some noble thing. It is quite the reverse when gossip descends to relating details which are private, to telling that which it would be disagreeable to our

friends to have discussed, or to tampering with motives which are not known to any but God.

So far as we are concerned, let us keep the gate of the lips from insincerity, from malicious talk, and from slander. It will be well to have a lofty standard of right in our minds, and to adhere to it strictly. The Rev. H. R. Reynolds of England, in a sermon on this topic says pithily, "There is nothing so much in our power as are the words of our mouth. It is possible for us to utter holy things, to speak God's praise, to breathe forth kindness in pure and gentle words; or it is possible for us to force our lips to silence, and make our words few." Impulsive people who speak hastily and regret at leisure, unforgiving people who speak bitterly, and bind themselves by mistaken vows, and thoughtless people who do not estimate the value of words at all, but who speak idly and at random, should remember this thought of the eloquent divine. We cannot always govern the temper of our souls, nor restrain the swift upheaving of vehement passion, but we can say, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther," and we can refuse to speak when we are influenced by resentment or angered at injustice.

We have to some extent considered this in the chapter on Self-Control, so now I want to talk to you about another phase of speech.

A lady's accents should be pure, her tones sweet, and her choice of language fastidious. The use of

slang, to add piquancy to our talk, has become too common. It always pains and jars upon a well-bred person, when the slang of the streets falls glibly from a rosebud mouth. Too often we hear it in the drawing-room, and are shocked that words and phrases originating in the markets, on the wharves, and in the commerce of the town, should have invaded the precincts of home. Every young girl has her own share in making and keeping society pure and elevated. Do you recall Ethel Lynn's beautiful stanzas, entitled "Woman's Kingdom"?

" Reaching high,
Its walls rise upward to the sky,
For weary souls who crave her aid,
For frightened souls, sin-sick, afraid,
While she beside the postern stands
To hold up weak and weary hands.

" Her throne, the hallowed chamber where
Her child is taught its evening prayer ;
Her crown, a good man's steadfast love,
Pure gold that fire shall only prove ;
Her warders, only loving prayers,
To guard the feet of stumbling cares ;

" Her tribute, loving hearts and true ;
Her orders, Faith's broad ribbon blue.
Decked with the cross, and starry Hope
Borne on a shining anchor up."

Don't forget, my dear girls, that each of us may have our part in this kingdom, and we must never underrate our power.

Mrs. Hayes, when she entered the White House, quietly said that she should carry her temperance principles along with her. Her determination not to offer wine on her table met with fierce opposition in some quarters, for from the early days of the Republic wine-drinking had been the social usage there. She encountered the opposition with silent firmness, went pleasantly on her way, making her entertainments elegant, refined, and beautiful, and the influence of her example is felt in society, and felt for good, throughout the whole Union. In Philadelphia, New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, the cause of temperance is greatly assisted by the practice and consistency of Mrs. Hayes. Not every one of us has so wide a sphere or so conspicuous an opportunity as the chief lady in the land, but each has a cordon of hearts which feel her power, each has loving eyes that watch her constantly, and each is surrounded by some who take impressions for their lives from her manners and her methods. Determine that slang shall not creep in where you abide.

Determine, further, that nobody shall go unreprieved who, in your presence, sneers at sacred things, or uses the words of Scripture to point a foolish jest. The temptation to do this comes too readily to an irresponsible tongue. Never hesitate to show that you do not at all approve of such levity. Refrain from it entirely, and show displeasure if others indulge in it.

Need I caution my readers against letting profanity issue through the gate of the lips? You think not. I wish I could be sure that neither Mabel, nor Clara, nor Daisy ever sins in this way. But I too frequently hear Goodness! Gracious! Mercy! and the like exclamations, springing easily to the lips of school-girls, to feel that the third commandment is as truly understood and as faithfully obeyed as it ought to be. It may never have occurred to those who thus use these words as expletives, as expressions of amazement, satisfaction, or pleasure, that they are the attributes of God, and worthy of being reverentially used.

What is the law of our Lord?

"Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

Exaggeration should not be suffered, under the winning garb of poetry, or mantled as a vivid imagination, to become the habit of our speech. Exaggerated speech implies exaggerated thought, and we cannot be sure of ourselves if we are not always simply true.

Sometimes there is a conflict between courtesy and sincerity, which makes it difficult for the conscientious person to decide precisely what she shall say. She desires, first of all, to do what she thinks right, but she does not wish to wound the feelings of an acquaintance. Perhaps she compromises the matter by saying some pleasant thing which she does not mean, and then, going on her way, revolves uneasily in her own

mind the reply, or the address, or the invitation given, half smiling and half grieving over her action. Girls, there is not usually a conflict between good manners and integrity, but when there is, truth should be your primary consideration, and politeness the secondary one.

And one thought more.

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer.”

As followers of Jesus, we have a deep interest in thinking how we can serve him, not afar off, but near at hand. What can we do, day by day, for the Friend who is doing everything for us? How can we show him our love? How can we wear his colors, so that all who see us may know that we belong to him?

We should be glad and proud to serve so glorious a Master. We should give him no reluctant service. Surely our thoughts should often be of him and of his grace, and we should never hesitate to say words in earnest to the gay, the merry, the sad, or the hopeless, about Jesus and his love.

CHAPTER XI.

DAYS OF SORROW.

My heart ached when, one fair, sweet morning in the spring, a friend came and told me of a dear young girl who had recently lost her mother, and who felt that she could never again be happy.

This conviction that the joy of life is over, that we must walk in the shadow till the end, is common to most of us when we are in the loneliness of a deep grief. How slowly the days wear away, each one as long as three ordinary ones! How little interest we take in affairs which formerly engrossed us! How utterly impossible and undesirable it seems, while the bereavement is fresh, that we should ever allow ourselves to be diverted from the pangs and the sad consolations of memory. And long after we have learned to take up the life-tasks again, and to enter upon scenes of animation or pleasure, there is a little niche in the heart, where a name, unforgotten, is laid up as in a shrine, where we hang garlands, and which we often turn to in moments of indescribable longing. Oh, that cry of the heart for its own, its own, who can never come back!

“Oh, for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!”

is the moan of every soul whose darlings have gone on, who learns patience and resignation only by degrees, and who gradually finds that heaven is becoming the home which is fuller than the earthly one of kindred and friends.

The youngest of us has had her days of sorrow, and to all of us they will, sooner or later, be multiplied. In what spirit are we to meet them? How are we to endure the sharp strokes of loss and pain? How are we to go on with life and duty, when all duty and all life are encompassed with the cloud that has hidden our loved from our sight. As Mrs. Browning sings,

“The wind that swept them out of sin
Has ruffled all our vesture,
On the shut door that let them in
We beat with frantic gesture.

“But God gives patience, Love learns strength,
And Faith remembers promise,
And Hope itself can smile at length
On other hopes gone from us.”

It is natural to mourn for our dead. We should be cold and hard-hearted if we shed no tears and heaved no sighs when the precious ones who have been with us for days and years are no longer here. But excessive grief unfits us for attention to the dear ones who

remain. No one can chide the mourner for wearing a saddened face, or for asking for a brief respite from accustomed cares. But to go for long periods of time shrouded in gloom, to cultivate a morbidness of mood, and to impose a shadow and an oppression on all whom we meet, is selfish, and is not brave. As soon as possible, especially if we believe God's word, we shall begin to look up and to inquire what stars of promise gleam out for us on the pages of inspiration.

I know a lovely woman who some years ago lost her husband. He had been always her lover, her guide, and her protector. The circumstances of his death were very distressing. A whole community shared her sorrow and mourned for her and her little ones, for the good physician left a vacant place which it would be very hard to supply. The eldest daughter was a student in a distant school, and when the funeral was over she returned to her books and her classes.

When her father had been gone a year, on the anniversary of his death the young girl came home. All the long miles of her journey, as the swift railway cars glided on, she kept thinking of her mother and dreading the sadness which would invest a hearth where sunshine and gladness had always been regnant. But lo! on the threshold the calm, beautiful mother met her with a smile of welcome, the other children came running gleefully up to kiss her, the supper-table was spread with the nicest food, and flowers stood on the

mantels and tables. Nothing about the house was gloomy, but everything spoke of cheerfulness and hope.

"Why, mother dear," said Olive, "I dreaded to come home. I thought you would be so sad to-day."

"Do you not remember," was the reply, "that I have something to make me glad? One year of our separation is over. I am one year nearer meeting your dear father again."

In our days of sorrow we should strive to look up, and not down. Not so much into the lowly grave where the precious dust reposes, as onward to the bright heaven where the ransomed spirit has gone. Absent from the body, indeed, but present with the Lord are those who have belonged to the Lord here.

There is a deep and never-failing well of comfort in those tender words of Christ: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me."

We should not spend our days and nights in simply lamenting our losses and crosses, but should more and more try to realize the fact that earth is only the place of preparation, of conflict, and of pilgrimage; the real life, the real home of the soul is with Him who gave himself to save us.

One of the most poignant elements of pain, in days of grief, is found in the persistency with which we re-

call unkind, thoughtless, or negligent acts or words of ours towards the dear ones when they were still with us. We are tortured by one and another remembrance, and over and over, when it is too late, we sigh at our omissions and wonder at our blindness. Why were we ever irritable, impatient, or perverse, with those whom we really loved so tenderly? Why were we so cold, so undemonstrative? Why did we not oftener tell them, by caresses, by gifts, by embraces, by frequent letters and visits, how large a part of our happiness they made? The reproaches do us no good, and they can do no good to those who are lying under the daisies, but they recur and form an exquisite and subtle torment to the wounded heart.

Let us learn from this experience, which few of us have not tasted, to be all gentleness and tenderness and patience with the living. If there be a dear aged friend under your roof, bear with her infirmities, reverence her feebleness, and attend with deferential love on her needs. Make the old happy, and suffer them to lean on your strength. If there be children in the household, do your share in brightening their hours of sunshine and drying their occasional tears. Do not give way to petulance, do not utter stinging, sarcastic speeches, and do not be indifferent to the little wants of those in your home. One never regrets an act of self-denial, a loving word, or a kindness done, when the opportunities for these are gone for ever.

We learn through our own sorrows how to help others in theirs. A friend told me that when her baby died she sat by the cold form, hour after hour, in a sort of despair. Friends came and went, tried their best to console her, and whispered to her that it was rebellious and wicked to give the reins to grief. She should think how much evil and suffering the babe was taken from, and how safe it was with Jesus. Nothing melted or moved her, until there entered a plain old market-woman, who sat down quietly beside the little coffin and began to cry. By-and-by she spoke. "I know how you are suffering," she said; "I have lost six."

When we once take home to our own consciousness the thought that our dear Saviour knows and comprehends all our feelings, our sorrows, and our joys, we are wonderfully strengthened. For though human sympathy is sweet, divine compassion is sweeter; and only they can fully understand this who have gone to the Lord when in darkness and trouble, and been sustained by the folding around them of the everlasting arms.

Few people who leave this world leave it with their work finished. Almost always there are projects which they undertook, and which were uncompleted, and there are enterprises dear to them, which they were obliged to give up. One way to keep their memories sacred is to take up what they dropped, and carry it forward. If it was a mother who has had to go away

from her children, there will be a satisfaction in so bringing up the little ones that she would approve, could she see. If it was a dear girl who loved to go about among the poor, and to minister to the orphaned and the sick, resolve that they at least shall not miss her benefactions. Rather than by spending large sums on the graves of our friends, should we build their monuments by carrying forward their work.

In any case, the sooner we gather courage and resolution to begin work of some kind, the sooner shall we emerge from the paralysis of sorrow. We must take to heart the lesson preached from every low mound in the cemetery: "The time is short." There is something for us to do, and we have not many years remaining in which to do it. We are not sure of even one year, or one week. Therefore let us not sit with clasped hands, but let us be busy—cheerfully, hopefully, heartily, for the Master is looking on.

We do not all live so intensely as did Paul, as did John, as have done a multitude of whom the world was not worthy. As Andrew Marvel wrote,

"But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariots hurrying near,
And yonder all before me lie
Deserts of vast eternity."

This is the spirit which has animated men and women who have set the world forward on its way. It should, partially at least, influence us every one.

We have only the present on which to count, but if we use every present moment well and grandly, we shall never have the sense that life has been wasted and spent in vain.

"Always strike your hour," said a gentleman to a young girl, in an excellent story entitled "Our Helen."

"I don't think I know what you mean, sir."

"Why, do as a clock does when its long hand reaches twelve. It strikes its hour, its appointed hour, and then goes on to the next, without looking forward or back."

That is good advice for all days, but it is good advice especially for those who are ready to feel that life has nothing more to offer them. Happiness may be shadowed, friends may be removed, fortune may be dissipated, health may be shattered, but there is always duty left. It may be active, or it may be passive, but it is there; and if you accept it and try to live up to its full measure, asking God's blessing, you will be sustained and assisted.

By-and-by too, almost imperceptibly, you will discover that the sorrowful days are not forgotten, but so glorified that you enjoy all your pleasures the more because you have had them, and they have been consecrated to you.

CHAPTER XII.

HAVING A GRIEVANCE.

VERY different from the atmosphere which enfolds days of real sorrow, is the thick, blanket-like fog which overhangs the days of people who have a grievance to bear. They go around with an injured air, as though they were the victims of some cruel fate. There may be blue sky somewhere, but it is invisible from their standpoint. The worst of their prevalent temper of mind is, that it spreads like an infection. Each person who comes within range of their influence is saddened, or fretted, or angered by their behavior, and everything which in turn they touch, gets a crooked impulse.

Now if any set of people anywhere should, as a rule, be blithe, lighthearted, cheery, and gay, it should be our girls. They are young. Youth itself is an immense possession and a magnificent advantage. They are surrounded by those who love them. They can diffuse happiness by simply being pleased and happy, and letting it show in their faces and their words that they are so. Yet some of them go moping about with weary eyes and unsmiling lips; some of

them assume expressions of melancholy; and others nurse in their hearts the feeling that they are overlooked and ill-treated, where they should be admired and considered.

I once knew a tiny maiden who, on her first going to school, used to retire to a corner of the playground at recess, and pretend to be sad, so that her mates might come and wonder at and console her. She liked, wee woman that she was, to be the object of attention, and though doubtless a half-unconscious vanity was the mainspring of her action, the morbid desire for sympathy, which may make even a child miserable, was there as well. I am not sure but that motive inspires not a little melodrama in childhood, of which the spectators are not informed even vaguely.

The recollection of this baby actress often comes to me now, when I meet healthy, happy girls who seem to think it the proper thing to nurse a grievance. One, whom I will call Stella, was here in my room a while ago. It is the sunniest and brightest of days. Rain fell last night, and washed every leaf and blade of grass until they all shine. The dandelions under the window gem the lawn like golden stars. A honey-bee is flying from flower to flower, gathering sweets to carry to the hive. The sky bends lovingly over the earth, unflecked by clouds. Stella came in, fresh as the morning, with bright and rosy cheeks, but she had not talked with me five minutes before I discovered

that she was in a mood for making complaint of the universe. Nothing in her life was satisfactory. She was not beloved like Lucy. She had not Nellie's advantages. She saw Cornelia preferred before her. Her new dress did not fit perfectly, and the trimming was not the match she desired. Madame Snipkins invariably bestowed more labor on Clara's and Bella's dresses than on hers.

I am sorry for Stella. Already her naturally pretty face begins to be marred by the presence of this undesirable spirit. Discontent, envy or jealousy can take the zest from every pleasure, and dash every joy with the bitterness of disappointment. Marks and lines, graven by petulance and irritability, are writing themselves on Stella's brow. That telltale feature, the mouth, has taken a trick of dropping at the corners, and curling into a sneer of disdain and dissatisfaction.

If for no higher reason than the mere wish to remain attractive and charming in the eyes of others, it would be worth the while of young ladies to avoid poor Stella's error, and cultivate a placid habit of making the very best of things as they happen to exist. Day by day the soul writes itself on the countenance. The pure, sweet, contented, and unselfish spirit shines through clear eyes, beams on an open face, and imparts loveliness to even plain and homely features. No matter how deficient in beauty a young girl may be, there is nothing to hinder her from beginning to

gain something far better than mere exterior elegance. The richest blending of cream and rose in the complexion may be disfigured by accident, impaired by exposure, and imperilled by disease; but the beauty of the soul will shine out like a flame through a transparency, and show itself superior to the skin. Equally, a predominant unhappiness of temper will reveal itself in the countenance in time, and no assumption of a transient amiability will entirely remove its effects.

Have you a fancied grievance? Have you drifted into a state of self-pity, in which you are sensitive, easily hurt, and a target for many random arrows?

Perhaps you have some real burdens to bear. You may have tastes which are ungratified, ambitions unfulfilled, aspirations denied, and talents unemployed. It is possible that you suffer from that solitude which the absence of congenial companionship always causes. Your education may have set you apart from your companions, and given you a wider outlook than theirs. Yet do not permit in your heart a feeling of impatience with dear ones in your household, although while you are roving in thought over wide fields of poetry, they are chiefly interested in butter and eggs. These have their uses too. The kitchen is as legitimate a place for woman's labor and thought as the parlor and the library. Your education has signally failed if it has not taught you to look upon small, practical, and inconspicuous things as having their due value. You

should not smile complacently over the mistakes in syntax of the woman, be she mother, auntie, or servant, who can make better bread, better pies, and better puddings than you can. There are more educations than one, and intelligence is not restricted to the love or the lore of books. The man or woman whose faulty grammar shocks your ear may be learned in the unwritten science of the fields—may have gathered facts unknown to you with regard to the mysteries of nature and the habitudes of birds and plants. In all knowledge there is power. And it is the conceit of ignorance which inflates half-taught people, and seeks to make them absurd by the overestimate they place on the little they have acquired. It was the wise Socrates who said that he knew nothing but this—that he knew nothing. As a rule, the wisest are the simplest. Agassiz was as gentle as a child, and Mary Somerville was as modest, with her honors thick upon her, as a blushing girl beneath her mother's wing.

Did you ever meet with girls who were ashamed of their parents, and apologetic for them, who tried to keep them in the background when there was company in the house? I did on one occasion, and I shall never forget my sense of shame on their account—shame for their unfilial behavior and for my sex, which they disgraced.

I once received a call of ceremony from two well-dressed and well-mannered young women, who invited

me to return their visit. When I did so I was treated with much affability, and entertained with pleasant conversation, refined attention, and music. During my call, an elderly and old-fashioned-looking lady entered the parlor, hovered a moment or two near the group, as if uncertain of her reception and unassured of her welcome, and at last left the room, no notice having been taken of her by either of her daughters, for such they were. After her departure, one of them whispered confidentially, "We have to excuse a great deal in ma. She is not used to society. She is very uncongenial to us both." Poor, unhonored mother! How I pitied her when I learned how she had toiled and denied herself for these ungrateful children.

As the opposite of this, let me relate another story. At a gay watering-place one summer, there was a bright and lovely girl, the acknowledged belle of the season, the queen of the parlor and the fête. Her vivacity, her sweet face, her quick wit, and her brilliant singing and playing were the themes of admiring tongues. She was accompanied by a retiring and dignified lady, who had been her governess, and was now her friend. It was understood that her mother was an invalid, who preferred to keep apart from such festivities, and stayed much in her own chamber. One morning Mabel was as usual the leading spirit, the centre of a circle of young people. They were gathered on the broad veranda of the hotel, the girls with their grace-

ful knitting or embroidery, the young gentlemen helping or hindering, and watching the deft movements of white and dimpled hands with admiration. The flash and glitter of keen repartee went on, and merry laughter echoed on the summer air.

Presently an odd figure, bizarre in costume, uncouth in appearance, and feeble in movement, issued from a doorway near, and addressed an order to a servant in a harsh, inharmonious voice. Possessed by the spirit of drollery which sometimes runs away with good manners, one or two of the young people began in a covert way to make this person the object of their ridicule. Instantly Mabel arose, advanced to the lady, and to the assembled circle presented her as "My mother." She did the right thing, and at once the mirth was hushed, and every one revered her for her daughterly behavior.

If you have a real grievance, resolutely keep it in the background. Let only the pleasant things come to the front. If you have an imaginary one, crush it, and do not let it crush you.

Count the mercies, not the misfortunes. "Doe the next thyng." Be grateful ever to the Giver of all good gifts, who maketh the outgoing of so many of our mornings and evenings to rejoice. Believe me, that nothing so glorifies life, as the habit of crowning its every hour with thanks.

CHAPTER XIII.

COURAGE.

COURAGE is one of the finest attributes of character, and one of the most essential to nobleness of life. You need not be reminded that it is of various degrees, and that one may possess physical courage, so that a thunder-storm, a runaway horse, or a fire, shall not daunt the heart or blanch the cheek, and still be deficient in moral fibre. Again, one who is morally and spiritually brave, who dares perform a disagreeable duty, and say a faithful though unwelcome word in season, may be physically timid, afraid of the dark, perhaps timorous and trembling before the lightning, and ready to scream at a mouse or a beetle.

What I want to impress on you is, that courage of both kinds may be cultivated. If we recognize our limitations and acknowledge our lacks, we may, by patient training, increase our powers and make up our deficiencies. It is when we are poor and ignorant, and blind, and naked, yet think ourselves wise, and rich, and grand, that our poverty works our destruction. Self-conceit bars the door against progress. There is no improvement possible to those who consider themselves already perfect.

I have seen silly girls who plumed themselves on being timid, and fancied that an affectation of terror made them interesting and attractive. Never was there a greater mistake. The spectator may pity the quaking, quivering young lady who faints at the apparition of a spider, and daintily shrieks when she sees the peaceful cow, browsing knee-deep in the clover, but she awakens only pity, not admiration. That is reserved for the brave girl who, while modest and gentle, can help herself; who is equal to the emergency and mistress of the situation.

All through the pages of history, the women who challenge the homage of the world are they who rise to the hour, and conquer by force of personal character. Elizabeth of England was vain, capricious and despotic, but she was superbly brave, and beneath her frivolities and levities there beat a strong and sturdy heart, which refused to be alarmed in the presence of danger. Her beautiful cousin of Scotland, Mary, whose loveliness has almost drawn a veil over her infamy, was as brave as a lioness. Sweet Lady Jane Grey, that pure white violet, whom ambitious kinsmen forced to the throne, and who perished so soon on the scaffold, was of that high order of womanhood in whom fortitude and patience, saintly resignation and the gentlest modesty are combined. So with hundreds of obscurer women, witnesses for Christ of old, or martyrs to the faith in France, in England, and in Scotland. The courage which

endured uncomplainingly for Christ's sake, wins our praises now.

In reading the lives of the three gifted Brontë sisters, who grew up in the gray old parsonage at Haworth, we are struck by a contrast of courage which is very marked. Two of the sisters, Emily and Anne, died while still quite young, of consumption. The first fought against the disease as though it had been an enemy, ignored it with fierce vehemence, went steadily on with her work, refusing to consult a physician or to take remedies, until there came a day when the rattling breath and glazing eyes told the family that death had arrived. As Charlotte records, sadly, "She was torn, conscious, panting, reluctant, though resolute, out of life." The pages which tell of her sickness and death seem to drip with tears, and her morbid and half insane courage was an agony to the dear ones who were not permitted to mitigate her sufferings by any tender ministries.

Far otherwise was it with her gentle sister Anne, who from the very first felt that her malady might be fatal, but used every available means to free herself from its grasp. "God's will be done," was the language of her soul, and serenely, sweetly, submissively she yielded to that will, though solicitous to live, and be well, if life were possible. Very touching and tender are some lines which were found in her little desk after her decease :

"I hoped that with the brave and strong
My portioned task might lie ;
To toil amid the busy throng,
With purpose pure and high.

"But God has fixed another part,
And he has fixed it well.
I said so with my bleeding heart,
When first the anguish fell.

"Thou God hast taken our delight,
Our treasured hope, away ;
Thou bidst us now weep through the night,
And sorrow through the day.

"These weary hours will not be lost,
These days of misery,
These nights of darkness, anguish-tossed
Can I but turn to thee,

"With secret labor to sustain
In humble patience every blow ;
To gather fortitude from pain,
And holiness from woe.

"Thus let me serve thee from my heart,
Whate'er my written fate ;
Whether thus early to depart,
Or yet a while to wait.

"If thou shouldst bring me back to life,
More humbled I should be ;
More wise, more strengthened for the strife,
More apt to lean on thee.

"Should death be standing at the gate,
Thus should I keep my vow ;
But, Lord, whatever be my fate,
Oh let me serve thee now."

How steadfast and confident the courage of the disciple manifested here. How much better courage kindled from the altar of God, than that born only of human strength.

To a nature retiring and unobtrusive, it is at times a great trial to be obliged to go forward and take the lead. For instance, Mabel, whose home has been in the city, goes with her parents to reside in a rural village. In the church in which she was brought up there were many qualified by practice and native fitness to conduct and take part in, we will say, the ladies' prayer-meeting. In the little community in which she comes, there are very few. The pastor calls and suggests to Mabel that by-and-by, when she shall be better acquainted with the young people, she shall try to organize a meeting, and to awaken an enthusiasm for the cause of missions. He has been desirous to see this accomplished, but till now the way has not been plain.

Poor Mabel! She turns hot and cold and has a nervous shiver and a burning flush, at the thought of what he asks. She organize? She awake enthusiasm? She open her mouth or pray in a meeting! Why, she has always enjoyed such things, but it was perfectly understood that she was one of the silent and sympa-

Hours with Girls.

thetic ones, who were never to be called upon in public! But what if this be the voice of duty? What if her Father in heaven has placed her here for this? What if the Master has allotted this place to her in the ranks? If she be truly a child of God, she will accept the task with misgivings and tremblings, yet cheerfully, and go forward trusting in God. And he who said to Moses, "Certainly I will be with thee," will be with her, her helper and friend.

It is often found that a dreaded thing ceases to be dreadful when approached and gazed at boldly. Some of us have known the apprehension which steals upon us in the night, when the moonlight or the soft starlight, falling on familiar objects in the room, makes them assume strange and unfamiliar shapes. We may lie still, victims of absurd and inexplicable fright, or we may rise, advance to the chair or the table, where the hallucination menaces, and lo! terror vanishes, and we are ready to laugh in our relief. There are people who are, their lives long, subject to bondage through their fear of the contagion of disease. Fevers and infections stalk through their dreams, and torment their waking hours. They are in a state of chronic alarm about diphtheria, small-pox and scarlatina, and should one of these diseases become epidemic they are very likely to fall a prey to it. The unrest and want of poise in their minds leave their bodies defenceless and exposed.

Some people, brave in many things, are timid, perhaps, in some one direction. They may be intelligent about other affairs, and reason about them with no flaw in their logic, but there is a pet superstition, which keeps them company, and poisons the cup of their joy. A looking-glass falls: seven years' trouble darts at once into their thought. A journey is to be begun on Friday: it must be postponed, for Friday is unlucky. Thirteen guests are at the table: alas! one will surely die within the year! A dog howls under the window, and again discomfort and foreboding. Persons who have once allowed their minds to be fettered in this way, find it hard to break their chains. The old myths, hoary with antiquity, have a strange vitality and tenacity. Crooned into the infant ear by some old nurse, imbibed with mother's milk, the superstition holds its own against wisdom and common-sense and religion.

I wish you would be persuaded to let neither of these forms of terror dominate you. The fear of disease may greatly hinder your usefulness, should it ever become necessary for you to watch with and care for the stricken. Rise to heroism in this special thing, and refuse to be cowardly and unwomanly. "I would have you without carefulness," said Paul. "Take no thought for the morrow," said the Saviour. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

"Never cross a bridge until you come to it," con-

denses the homely wit of the popular thought. The courage which shall emancipate us from fears of what may never befall is a courage within our reach.

About the other, it is less tangible, and therefore more difficult to cope with. Cannons and armed arsenals cannot so effectually shut the harbor in from attack, as can the thick white sea-mist. But sunlight scatters the fog, and the sunlight of a real faith will dissipate the fog of superstition. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," not only from fatal sin, but from error and blight and unworthy fears.

It sometimes requires courage to recede from a wrong position, to beg pardon if we have inadvertently or wilfully offended, and so set right a complication which has come about through our mistaken planning. True courage does not hesitate a moment in such a case. Nature resents humility, but in the kingdom of grace humility goes before honor. The air in the valley of humiliation is wholesome, and the plant heartease grows there.

The courage to avow belief in the Saviour, and to confess his name before men, is sometimes wanting, and they who excuse themselves from joining the church because of this, belong to the army of the craven-hearted. Why should any one be afraid or ashamed to swear allegiance to the Lord Jesus, to whom all glory and honor belong?

"Ashamed of Jesus! that dear friend
On whom my hopes of heaven depend!
No, when I blush, be this my shame,
That I no more revere his name."

Various excuses are pleaded, but the true reason why the disciple does not own the Master is found in cold love, indifferent service, and languid courage.

Let me urge you, if indeed you have a sweet hope that you are his and he is yours, to delay no longer in taking his name upon you, before men. Do not fear lest you shall prove unfaithful to your profession. Do not tremble lest friends shall call you inconsistent, and the world survey you with criticism. Do not shrink from giving up some idle gayeties and transient gratifications. Surrender yourself wholly to the divine Redeemer, and trust him to keep you from dishonoring his name, to keep you in peace, to finally lead you home. Unto you is the promise, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation."

"Behold, I come quickly; hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

Overcoming through the blood of the Lamb, renewing courage daily, by prayer, by perseverance in labor, and by communion with those who love God, the Christian life will more and more become a song of thanksgiving.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONVERSION AND CONSECRATION.

WHAT is it to be converted? It is simply to be *turned* away from sin and worldliness, and toward God and heaven. What does consecration imply? Simply the surrender of all that we have and all that we are to the Lord, and the entire devotion of our lives to his service.

People sometimes experience a difficulty in thinking about coming to Christ, because they have acquired wrong and mistaken notions on the subject. Many have an idea that when the great change in their hearts and lives takes place, it will be accompanied by signs and wonders. They have read the biographies of eminent saints, and they have noticed that some of them went through a period of darkness and distress, were agonized under a sense of their sinfulness, and finally were brought into a state of rapture and joy, when Christ revealed himself to their souls. If no similar emotional experience is given to them, they fear that they have not been truly converted.

Now the fact is that no two minds are precisely alike. There is as much variety in mental characteristics as in human faces. It is impossible to the quiet,

practical, unimaginative person to enter the Christian life with the same feelings, intense, vivid, and exultant, which naturally arise in the person of ardent fancy and quick poetical nature. One who has pursued a course of conscious enmity to all that is holy, or who has wandered like the prodigal into far-off lands, may feel, on returning to his Father in heaven, very differently from the child who has always dwelt in an atmosphere of Christian love and trust. The children of devout parents are frequently so early brought to Christ, that they cannot fix upon any date when they left the world and gave themselves to him. They have the blessedness of having been his as far back as they can remember.

But while the *feeling* in many cases may be very dissimilar, the *principle* is in every case the same. There is but one way of salvation, and that way is by the cross of Christ, who gave himself for lost sinners. The love that brought him to be a little babe in his mother's arms, that influenced him through three-and-thirty years to toil and suffer among men, and that culminated at last on Calvary in that amazing sacrifice, is the love which saves us, if we will accept it. The question is not, Will Jesus receive and forgive us, will the Father be pleased with us and own us as his children, and will the Holy Spirit abide with us, our Comforter and Friend? but Are we willing to be saved, are we sorry for our sins, and do we desire to lead a new

life? No soul which ever came to Christ penitent and believing was ever sent away without a blessing.

Somebody asks, "But how can I come? What do you mean by coming?" Simply this: Wherever you are, if, conscious of estrangement and guilt, you long to return to God's love and service, lift up an earnest petition to him, saying, "Just as I am, I throw myself at the Saviour's feet. I trust his grace. I cannot atone for my own sins, but I do trust in his atonement. Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" So easy, so short, so childlike is coming, that whosoever will may come. The very purpose to come is the work of the Holy Spirit in your heart. The moment you have really done this you are accepted, and you have passed from the state of being unconverted to the state of being converted. It is necessary to confess your weakness and sinfulness, and your own inability to save yourself. It is equally necessary to believe in the strength, the grace, and the compassion of Christ, and to venture yourself wholly upon him. Do it once for all and for ever. It may be that you will not immediately possess the happiness which you hope and long for, but never mind. Let your hand seek the hand that was pierced for you, and walk straight on in the narrow path. Light will come after a while. It will come the sooner if you cultivate the habit of looking away from self and up to Christ. Study his words as they were spoken to his followers when he was on the

earth. Reflect often on his beauty, and think of him as glorified and triumphant. He reigns in heaven to-day.

I have often heard people say that there was to them a difficulty in thinking of the Lord Jesus as a person. They could not realize him as a living present being so thoroughly as they wished to. This seems strange to me, for there is no memoir in the annals of literature, so minute, so tender, and so complete, as the memoir which is given us in the four gospels. Perhaps those who have been troubled by this perplexity, would find it vanishing, like a morning mist, if they would just read one of the gospels, that of John for instance, constantly and lovingly, praying for light and for an understanding heart.

There are hundreds of persons whom we have never seen, with whom we are entirely familiar, and who are part and parcel of our daily lives. You can recall many historical characters, in remote ages and in periods near at hand, concerning whom you have no doubt, of whom you have pictures in your mind, and whom you would recognize were they by any possibility to be raised to life before your eyes. Queen Victoria is not a myth when her name is mentioned, and though you never saw her, and never may do so, you have no trouble in investing her with the purple of her royal womanhood. Now, try when there flits over your heart a shadowy doubt of the personality of our

Lord, to realize that he is as much a person as your father, your brother, your dearest friend; and when you pray to him, do away with the thought that your prayers are not heard by one who is as real in his individuality, as he was in the days of his life upon earth.

Consecration, dear girls, I would have you regard as a precious privilege. The reason why some have little peace in the divine life, is probably found here: that their service is feeble and half-hearted. They love their own ease, their own pleasure, and their own low ambitions. They do not seek first and constantly the Master's wishes and work. They give grudgingly, finding it hard to endure self-denial that the poor may have the gospel preached to them, caring more for luxuries and adornments than for Christ. They have not entirely lost their wills in blessed submission to his will; and until they do this, they will not have the full measure of satisfaction which is the birthright of all who are true disciples.

Dear young girls, take the words of that sweet singer, who so lately went home, for your own. Say with Frances Havergal,

"In full and glad surrender we give ourselves to thee,
Thine utterly and only and evermore to be.
O Son of God, who lovest us, we will be thine alone,
And all we are, and all we have, shall henceforth be
thine own."

CHAPTER XV.

JOINING THE CHURCH.

THERE are mistaken people in the world, who think they can serve Christ just as well outside the church as within its pale. They think that if only their hearts are right before God, it matters little whether or not men are aware of their position. There are other mistaken people, who refrain from uniting with the church because they have a very high standard of duty, to which they think church-members should conform, and they are afraid that they cannot approach their own ideal. Others, again, have doubts as to whether they are true disciples. They have not the feeling of assurance which they would like to have, and, as they express it, they are not good enough to make a profession of religion.

Of these different classes, perhaps the last are the most deeply in error; for it is not by our own merits, but only and wholly through Christ our blessed Redeemer, that we are saved. Only as we trust in him and love him have we a right to hope for the mercy of God. Those who love Him should not doubt that, having begun in them a good work, he will be able to carry it on until the end. They should not spend their

time in measuring their attainments and those of others by any human standard, but should look constantly unto Jesus. Those who think their piety can grow and flourish as well out of the church as in it, are entertaining an opinion which is not worthy of being held by persons of ordinary intelligence.

First let me say to you, if you have any hesitation on the subject, that you must not forget that the Lord himself was the organizer of the church. The sacrament of the Last Supper was instituted by him in the very shadow of the cross. It pleased him to take bread and wine, common food and drink, and make them symbols of his dear body broken for sin, and his precious blood shed for sin's remission. It pleased him to lift the common act of partaking of a meal socially out of a common and into a sacred meaning, so that to the end of time, whenever the disciples shall eat the bread and taste the wine in remembrance of him, they will be showing forth his death until he come. It was his plain command that his followers should take up the cross and walk in the narrow way. "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God. But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God."

It ought to be considered a very sweet privilege to be enrolled visibly and individually among the hosts of God's people.

“The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain,
His blood-red banner streams afar;
Who follows in his train?”

When you remember how many of the noblest, the best, and the loveliest of men and women, have been in the bands of Christ's servants; when you look back to the early times, and read the heroic list of those who died for the truth, and when you look up to the heavenly home, and think of the great multitude there in white robes, with palms in their hands, is it not a joy and an honor that you are permitted to make one in so great an army? When you reflect, too, on the tender relationship which exists between Christ and his people, you find in that an additional reason why you should join his church. Take the fifteenth chapter of the gospel of St. John, and read it as though it were a letter sent from heaven to you personally, to day.

“If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

“These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

“This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

“Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

So the beautiful verses go on, each shining like a dewy pearl threaded on a silver cord. What a delightful and wonderful thing that we who are talking—you, Mary, you, Elsie, in your quiet home-life, in your little place, I in my room where I sit to write these words—may be the *friends* of Jesus, and have his love *abiding* with us, a fragrance which will perfume every hour of life, a help which will never forsake us, and a gladness which will grow ever deeper and truer. Do not shut yourselves out from the intimacy of friendship to which the Lord invites you. Joining the church is not essential to our salvation, for that is brought about by our being joined to the Lord Jesus Christ. But it is essential to our best development in grace, to our comfort in Christian life, and to our setting a right example and exerting a beneficent influence.

We receive a great deal of help from pleasant associations. It is easier to do what we ought when those around us are in sympathy with us. Rowing up stream is hard work. It is hard to walk with the wind beating sharp and keen in our faces. But when we are surrounded by sisters and brothers who desire our improvement, who stimulate us by their kind and affectionate vigilance, and who care for our happiness, life is not difficult and hard.

Do not *rest satisfied* when you have become a mem-

ber of the church. Take hold at once of some part of Christian work. Can you think of nothing which you wish to do? Then pray to be guided. The Lord needs you, and there is work which nobody else can do for him as you can, and it is waiting for you.

I hear Louise saying, "If I could find a grand opportunity, I would embrace it; but I am shut up to a narrow sphere of retired living, and there is no chance for me." And Sophie, who has been studying missionary periodicals, thinks that, could she but go to Burmah or Japan for Jesus' sake, she would go joyfully; but what can she find for her hands in her own little village, where the people are all respectable, and where there is no room for such effort as she would like to make?

Let me tell you, girls, that the best foreign missionaries were prepared for their labors by being good home missionaries first. A missionary is one sent. You may be sent on the Master's errands, though you are sent no farther than the mother's invalid chamber, than the brother's room which needs arranging and dusting, than the nursery where the fretful babe is in want of soothing and caressing. I heard, not long ago, of an enthusiastic Christian woman, who decided that she would go nowhere on business or pleasure without saying something for Jesus. But though her motive was good, her actions were sometimes strangely mistaken and out of place, and she repelled people, in-

stead of attracting them. Try rather to live in a Christ-like way, than to talk constantly of Christ. Talk, when it is natural, spontaneous, the outflow of a loving heart, will do good, and the word for Jesus should never be withheld through cowardly fear or chilling indifference. Yet the sweetness of love, which makes those around you happy, which endures discomfort, and incurs self-denial, is the sweetness which wins. Character is built slowly. Let your daily life be a series of steps towards the building of a sincere and earnest Christian character.

Do not try to do good *in some other woman's way*. Too many imitate, when they should emulate. You may admire your pastor's wife or your Sunday-school teacher, and yet if you spend your time and strength in merely copying her, you will commit yourself to a course which will end in failure. The longer I live, the more I realize that one perfect copy, and only one, has been set for our imitation, and that copy is Christ. We cannot fail to grow into his likeness if we are always trying to live as he would have us, and if, wherever we are, we ask ourselves the question, What would Jesus have us do?

CHAPTER XVI.

THE TEMPERANCE REFORM.

HAVE girls any share in responsibility about the great curse of intemperance, which spreads so much misery and breaks so many hearts in this land? I think they have. I think the temperance reform concerns everybody, because it comes close to every home. Every young woman who has brothers, and every young woman whose friends have brothers, has a duty to perform with regard to it. No other thing causes the wretchedness which is caused by the use of liquor as a beverage. It ruins good men and women. It destroys refinement and undermines truth. It directly tends to poverty. It sends men to prison, and drives their wives and children to despair. The liquor traffic and the appetite for stimulants sweep their thousands of victims into the graves of drunkards, graves unhonored and unblessed by hope of a happy hereafter.

I wish I could induce you to take a strong and decided stand for temperance in two ways. So far as you are personally concerned, I would urge you never to offer a glass of wine at a social entertainment, never to sanction its use at a social festival if you can avoid it, and never to act as though its use by others were to

you a matter of indifference. I would urge you not to admit to the circle of your intimate friends young men and women who are in the habit of drinking, even in moderation. The habit is insidious and grows by indulgence, and they who to-day take a sip now and then, may in two, three, or five years, find themselves the slaves of a vice they despise. Girls and women possess no charm which can give them immunity from peril if they yield to the temptation to tamper with intoxicants. Perhaps from the fact that their occupations are more generally in-doors, and their nervous organization is finer and more complicated, they are in the greater danger. I have known several very sad and distressing instances in which fair, delicate, highly-bred ladies, beginning under a physician's advice to take stimulants during convalescence, or when in a state of mental or physical depression, have gone by swift degrees farther and farther on, taking more wine, and oftener, till the draught which gave temporary relief seemed to become a necessity. At last the humiliating and mortifying truth could not be concealed—that these beautiful and gifted women had become inebriates. If you have a friend who has fallen under the power of temptation, I do not counsel you to stand aloof from that friend, as though you felt yourself holier and better. On the contrary, try to use your influence to persuade the unfortunate person to forsake the evil way. But in forming new associations, in making acquaint-

ances, and in the whole tenor of life which leads toward friendship, be careful not to entangle your lives with the lives of those who habitually drink. Many young girls suffer their peace and happiness to be wrecked through a foolish idea of self-sacrifice. They meet men who are brilliant, clever, and fascinating, and who pay them the tribute of admiration. They may be known to be unprincipled and unscrupulous, and perhaps dissipated. But the young women fondly think that *their* love and tenderness will do what other restraints have been powerless to effect. "Hugh has been gay, poor fellow," says Amy, "but now that he loves me, he will shun his old companions and avoid his old haunts. If I refuse to listen to his suit, he will perhaps be driven to despair and go straight to ruin." Mistaken Amy! If Hugh's own father and mother and sisters—if his self-respect and his innate sense of manhood have been too weak to protect him against vice and sensuality, do not dream that your little hand will stay the flood. For a few brief months of occasional intercourse, for a few weeks or months of wedded life, you may apparently succeed in your enterprise, but yours will be an exceptional case, indeed, if, when the novelty wears off and the glamour is faded, your private reform movement does not end in failure. Believe me, your womanhood can put itself to nobler uses than in mating with a man of infirm moral purpose in the hopeless crusade of bolstering him up in integrity.

There is one love strong enough to work a radical change in the heart of an intemperate man, and one only: that is the love of the Son of God. A man converted through and through, his hand clasping the cross, his strength daily renewed by prayer, and his confidence in himself replaced by humble dependence upon his Master, such a man may and can break the fetters of appetite. There is the secret of the true reform which succeeds with some. The paralyzed will and the mortified self-respect are then wonderfully invigorated and encouraged by something strong and vital which enters into the soul, cleansing and renewing it.

Whenever in a community the young men are aware that the young women collectively regard with disfavor all who indulge in dissipation and all who partake of liquor in any form or to any extent, drinking among young men will become unfashionable. It is curious to observe the variation in social tone on this topic in different places. I happened not long since to read in a leading American newspaper an urgent appeal to gentlemen not to drink in bar-rooms. The writer appeared to take it for granted that gentlemen would certainly drink somewhere, and that the offence would be venial if confined to homes and friends' houses. I am perfectly sure that the women of the city in which that editorial was written could put an end to the disgraceful state of affairs thus indicated, if

they would but attempt it bravely and quietly, using the potent force which makes woman the arbiter of social usage and the creator of social atmosphere.

What Mrs. Hayes has done for Washington by her simple, steadfast, and quiet adherence to her convictions, each of us can do in our degree in our smaller circles. Opportunity defines responsibility. Arrogant as the liquor traffic is, and unblushing as are its inroads on the laws, it will lose one great element of strength when women everywhere unite to oppose it, and when the home sentiment from the highest to the lowest classes is manifestly and steadily in its opposition.

There is one way in which a taste for stimulants is cultivated, and for which mothers and daughters are to blame. Those who use sauces flavored with wine or brandy, who infuse their mincemeat with the same, or, who prepare tempting fermented cordials, supposed to be innocent since they are home-brewed, are ministering to a diseased appetite. Keep the home cooking free from temptation.

How much harm has been done by some of the great novelists, who have given an endorsement to table habits of conviviality, by their piquant descriptions of gay banquets and feasts, it is impossible to tell. Yet we may be heartened to effort by the feeling that we are moving forward. Thirty or forty years ago, if biography is to be trusted, it was not uncommon in the best society in Edinburgh, for guests at a dinner to

drink till they had to be assisted to their homes. Fifty years ago, in New York, it was considered imperative to invite the transient visitor to take a glass of wine. Nearly everybody asked New Year's callers to take wine. With every succeeding year, less and less wine, eggnog, and similar beverages are displayed on the tables of hospitable women on New Year's day.

How much aggressive work for temperance you may be able to do, will depend greatly on your circumstances. It is by no means every young lady's duty to take an active part in temperance meetings, or to go to the homes of the wretched and fallen. That duty is clearly indicated for some, and as clearly is withheld from others. Wherever you are, it is your duty to be positive in your views, and to act upon them. If you are in company where champagne sparkles, let no mistaken notion of courtesy induce you to partake of it, and refrain always from offering the bright-hued cup of death to others.

Alcohol has its place in the economy of medicine, and as a remedial agent, has at times its uses. It is as perilous as strychnine, opium, or gunpowder, and we should confine it strictly to its own sphere, and approach it, as we approach other poisons, with care and caution.

CHAPTER XVII.

STUDY AT HOME.

IF you live in town where you have access to a good library, you can easily arrange for yourself a course of reading or study, to which you can adhere in the main, notwithstanding home cares and interruptions. But most people find that there is a kindling quality in contact with other minds, and what I want to suggest is, that it is pleasant and profitable for several young people, who are friends, to join together in undertaking a course of reading for intellectual culture. In places remote from libraries, the difficulties are greater, but the old adage usually proves itself true, that "where there is a will, there is a way."

I will suppose that in a certain village there are seven or eight young women who have left school, who are quite fully occupied with housework and sewing, and who do not wish to shirk any legitimate duty. But they have desires after mental growth. They hunger for improvement. They cannot endure the thought that they are to lose what they gained during schooldays, and to drift entirely out of the current of thought and education. At least, they wish to know something of what goes on in the great world of

mind, and to be able intelligently to enjoy interesting conversation and criticism.

They will be very much more likely to succeed in this endeavor if they combine their forces, than if each acts independently. Being distant from a library, they may form a little book-club. They must have funds of course, and perhaps they have little money, yet they need not be discouraged, for if they are in earnest funds will grow. One girl may give the money her bees made for her, another will have as her share, the price of her eggs or her chickens; and another still, will have gathered the berries from her bushes, or the grapes from her vines, and saved the little income thus obtained, for the higher uses and purposes of life. Few girls there are who do not *somehow* manage to procure ribbons and combs and corsets and feathers and furbelows, many of which add nothing whatever in beauty, style, or ornament to their costumes. Now, acknowledging the drawback of limited means, and confessing the small amounts in actual money possessed, yet when several people unite their strength and so get a nucleus for beginning, it is surprising how much their efforts will enable them to do. Books are cheap. As compared with other purchasable products, they are amazingly cheap, for a few well-selected volumes represent wealth not to be measured by dollars and cents.

Send for the catalogue of some good publishing

house, and with only ten dollars in hand, you will be surprised at the excellence of the five or six volumes you may buy. These should be the property of the club, and may be lent from one to another, each retaining a book two weeks. The club may constitute itself a lending library, making a charge of a few cents a week for the pleasure of reading a good book, the income thus secured being held strictly to the purpose of procuring additions to the number of books.

Whether or not you like this idea of becoming a book-owning society, you will find the entering upon a course of study together very stimulating and profitable. It is a wild wintry afternoon. White flakes are beginning to fall, and there is the promise of a storm before night. But the fire in Caroline's parlor will be cosy and warm, and, when the dinner is over, and the afternoon dress is donned, one and another young woman, well protected against the weather, may be seen going fearlessly out towards the place of resort. The girls are studying the period of Queen Elizabeth. When Elizabeth was reigning in England, what was the rest of the world about? Was it, or not, a time of intense excitement, of change, of restlessness, of heroic adventure, of lofty courage, and of revival of many activities? Who were the other reigning sovereigns of Europe? What was the condition of affairs in the other quarters of the globe? Who were the conspicuous figures in Elizabeth's time? Conspicuous for what?

What great writers left their impressions deeply on English literature, at this period? The fate of Mary Queen of Scots, was it deserved or otherwise? Who was John Knox, and what of his work in Scotland? What of household conveniences, and modes of travel, of dress and society in that time?

You see plainly that here is enough to occupy a set of bright studious girls for a whole winter. The hours they spend in such inquiry as this will be fruitful in solid acquirements, and golden in mental discipline. But literature is many-sided, and books are like the forest for multitude. They might, instead of an historical period, select a period in the wonderful story of missions, or take a country, once dark, and now shining in the dawn-light of the gospel. A pastor or former teacher will no doubt be happy to give helpful hints with regard to the choice of a subject for study. Perseverance in a chosen line of reading will repay the students in the end, not alone in the additions to their stock of knowledge, but in the mental discipline, and the power of attention and concentration gained in quiet hours.

I am always sorry for young people who wilt and grow dull and bored, as soon as they cease to be excited by some gay party, or occupied by some projected entertainment. Life is worth little which must be for ever fed with artificial stimulants. Resolve that for your part you will have resources. Lay

up stores for thought and memory, against the days which may come, days of pain, illness, or enforced seclusion because of weakness and advancing years. Determine that you will be bright and winsome companions for your home-friends, when the beauty of youth is faded.

CHAPTER XVIII.

COURTESY OF MANNER.

AN amusing story was told several winters ago of a rebuke administered by the performers at a drawing-room concert in London to the audience, who, instead of listening to the music, were talking with might and main. The leader had suffered annoyance from the same cause till his patience was exhausted. So he arranged beforehand that on this occasion, in the loudest part of the movement, at an understood signal, piano, violin, and violoncello, should suddenly cease. They did so, to the consternation of the assembly, many of whom were engaged in animated conversation, and yet were thus beached, in an instant, high and dry upon the shore of silence. Clear and loud in the astonished pause rang out the silvery voice of a lady, who exclaimed in the hearing of everybody, "We always fry ours in lard!"

A similar reproof was once given in an American city by Theodore Thomas to an elegant throng of ladies and gentlemen gathered at a Philharmonic rehearsal. With a peremptory wave of his baton the great leader halted the orchestra, and announced that

either the music or the talking must stop. Both could not proceed at once.

"Well," says Mattie, "what is parlor-music except a cover for conversation? I never think of devoting myself to listening when Herr Von Derdecken or Fraulein Steinbergh, or even one of my friends, like Connie White or Albert Bigelow, sits down to the piano."

That may be, and you are very impolite indeed in the matter, though I presume you do not mean to be so. Think of it. The performer is endeavoring to please and gratify you, and you are receiving his effort precisely as you would were you to open a book and read its pages while he was talking to you. He or she has devoted years of earnest and severe toil to the mastering of this accomplishment, by which many are rested, helped, and entertained, and you cannot refrain from a moment's trifling to attend to the piece which is being played for you. Perhaps you do not understand harmony, and have no ear for discords or sweet melodies, all being alike to you in your lack of training. Then you are equally inexcusable, for your presumption is great in condemning as dull and tedious what you do not in the least comprehend. Always, however, in parlors and concert-halls there are those to whom music affords a most exquisite enjoyment, and who are pained and interrupted by the vicinity of chatterers who disturb their tranquillity. The underbred thoughtlessness of girls who talk of their own affairs or giggle and flirt

while music is going on, acts upon and annoys the performers who play and sing and the really cultivated people who desire to listen. Pardon a word of reminder on this well-worn theme.

Courtesy is frequently ignored in church. In one way it is forgotten by those who are habitually a little too late in reaching their seats. Did you ever notice the degrees of tardiness in a congregation? Some are usually five minutes late, only five, but as they walk down the aisle with rustling silks or creaking boots, they distract the worship of those who are already seated. The voluntary is being played or the opening anthem has begun, or the minister is about to pray. The advent of these people is an interruption. And, besides the rudeness to pastor and fellow-worshippers, there is a lack of veneration to God and of respect to his house.

There are other discourtesies in church as marked as this of the late arrival there. To fidget, to yawn, to turn over the pages of the hymn-book, to whisper to a neighbor, and to gaze around you, with frequent and obtrusive changes of position, are indicative of ill-breeding and insulting to the place and the occasion. Even though the sermon fail to interest you, the minister—first because he is a gentleman, like any other gentleman, and next because he is the representative of his Master, and clothed upon with authority—is entitled to your polite and constant attention. A lady

should invariably be so self-controlled that she can repress in herself outward manifestations of listlessness and languor.

I am often sorry that the invaluable training in *sitting still* and maintaining the attitude of decorum towards elders and superiors, once a part of every child's education, is now missed by many. Manners do not come wholly by chance, nor are they entirely to be trusted to refined associations, though these greatly aid in their acquirement. Sooner or later most of us need the discipline of enforced rules, and conventionalities have their uses in the ease and grace they confer, the smoothness with which they oil the intercourse of society, and the friction from which they save.

Towards the aged and the feeble, and towards little children and servants, the courteous person is kind and deferential. True courtesy implies remembrance of the Bible rule, "In honor preferring one another." If you wish an example of lofty courtesy, make a study of the life of Paul, who always bore himself with simple dignity, who never was unequal to the situation, and who was loving and pitiful to his friends and to the suffering.

Manner and manners are often confused, or, by inexact people, thought of as being almost identical. Manner is really the expression of a person's whole character, the style of one's thought, and the subtle revelation of the soul, while manners are more like clothing

or decorative badges. People sometimes have ceremonious manners, while their manner is constrained, stiff, and shy. A lady's manner may be brusque, aggressive, and repellant, so that you are on the defensive so soon as you encounter her, yet she may have the etiquette of polite society at her fingers' ends, and never violate a single one of its arbitrary rules. And a woman may be most winning, lovable, and motherly in manner, and still be quite ignorant of many little points of conventional training.

To acquire a charming manner, girls, I would advise you to guard your hearts from impure thoughts, and to live much in the good company of the best books and the most high-minded people. Truth, tenderness, affection, and unselfish charity, enter into the composition of a good, because an engaging and unobtrusive manner. Not to think too highly of self, not to be over-sensitive, not to insist too strenuously on receiving attention and regard, are the negative qualities which the best womanly manner implies. As for the positive qualities, they are all wrapped up, as the rose in its bud, in one beautiful word—charity, or love. The thirteenth chapter of Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians is a complete manual on the subject.

Manners are the daily product of a thousand influences. Manners at the table, in company, at school, at home, have nearly everything to do with comfort and propriety. There is a word which sums up how

they are to be acquired. It is this—obedience. Conform to the laws which have been made presumably for the general convenience of the world, and conform to them willingly. When you are in doubt concerning any matter, do not be ashamed to ask advice of those who are well informed. If you have made a mistake, do not be crushed or needlessly humiliated, but determine to do better the next time. Never despise little things. Do not consider the acknowledgment of favors, the answering of letters, and the attending to trifling details, as of small importance. It is never right to omit saying, "Thank you," to the person who helps you in even the slightest particular.

CHAPTER XIX.

BEING YOURSELF.

"MARIA has been visiting the Crawfords," observed Miss Julia, as a young lady who was talking with Winifred at the gate tripped away, with a very airy bow and a sort of dancing step, which was in odd contrast with her somewhat substantial figure. "That is Angelina Crawford's bow and Melicent's walk, and, if you notice, she has put on her shawl scarf-wise, just as Florilla Crawford always wears hers. You can easily tell whom Maria has last seen by noticing her dress and demeanor."

I had occasion to meet Maria several times in the week following this remark, and I found it was quite embarrassing to become accustomed to her frequent changes. She was a very romantic young woman, was possessed of a vivid imagination, and almost too facile an adaptability to the company with whom she found herself. She took everybody's color. When she heard the views of the Lesters, who were pronounced and extreme in their ideas on certain subjects, she sympathized wholly with them, and assented amiably to their opinions, without taking the precaution to think whether

they were hers or not. For the hour she sincerely adopted them. But leaving the Lesters, and calling on the Deans, who were at the opposite pole of thought and feeling, Maria threw the Lesters over, declared herself of the same mind as the Deans, and to all intents and purposes was a Dean. The difficulty was to discover Maria Smith. Not only did she receive impressions from and reflect the tones of the friends with whom she was thrown, but the last book she read influenced her in the same way. For days together she would be the heroine of a story, wearing white dresses in cold weather, because the beautiful Lilian in the book did so, or curling herself up in window-seats and hiding behind curtains, because those were the habits of Isabella. Occasionally she developed a walking mania, and would go tramping off over hills and plains with thick boots and an alpenstock; and again her highest joy in life was to dream idle hours away in a hammock.

Maria's greatest defect was want of a settled purpose, and it arose in a great degree from this fatal propensity to copy other people. There are certain ways in which it is well to imitate good models. The graceful, gracious lady may well be admired by the young unformed girl. The teacher is very properly the object of the pupil's emulation. Daughters are praiseworthy when they endeavor to be as much as possible like their mothers in excellence of princi-

ple and gentleness of behavior. So far we are right in trying to attain to the best that we see in other people. But to be wrought upon by every passing influence, to attempt in a gush of enthusiasm for novelty, to be and act precisely like this and that person who has captivated our fancy, is silly and absurd.

We may, of course, veer to the other extreme. I recollect a droll instance of this in a quaint little girl whom I once happened to meet. Her name was Jane Ann. She sat bolt upright in her chair, knitting away on a long blue sock, as if she had been her own grandmother. It was evident that she had seen nothing since she left home which compared favorably in her mind with home conveniences and adornments. The gay sights of Washington, at that time bright with military pageantry, did not please or divert her; and she sat in the hotel window a homesick, forlorn, but brave and sturdy little woman, wearing the time away till it should please the grown folks who had brought her there to carry her back again to the cheery kitchen-fire and the ample fields of the homestead farm. Feeling compassionately towards her, I tried to be entertaining, and after a while called her "Jennie."

"Jane Ann, if you please!" was the instant correction, with a snap of the black eyes.

The little woman meant to be Jane Ann, and nobody else. She was typical of a sort of rigid inflexibility of temperament, just as Maria is typical of a too

fickle mobility of disposition. The one is as unfortunate as the other.

Let me tell you why I think every human being should try to be the self God meant to make in him or her. Let me tell you why you should be yourself, and I myself, without the constant endeavor to assume some other character.

The most obvious reason is, that God has an individual work for each of us, and has afforded us each our individual preparation. He has done this with his children always. It is very instructive to read the Bible, with the aim of finding how God made men ready to do his will. Moses was educated from his infancy, that he might become the deliverer and lawgiver of his nation. Samuel was set, as a little child, in the temple of the Lord. Daniel was specially trained for the service the Lord intended him for.

So, in reading the lives of the good men and women of our own day, we see plainly that their steps were ordered for them. Had they gone in this or the other direction, at some critical period, their whole life course would have been changed. God cares for us every one, with the supervision and care which a parent gives a child. He knows us and calls us by our names. He wishes us to fill a certain place, and to be surrounded with particular circumstances, which are arranged by him ; and we, I speak it reverently, make it harder for our Heavenly Father to do his work in

us, when we are discontented with ourselves, and waste our time and talents in trying to be what he never meant us for.

A few days ago, I stood beside the coffin of a dear young girl, who had been loved by a great many besides her own family. Her name was Irene. Its sweet significance, *peace*, suited her as though it were a key or an interpretation. Her face was full of sunshine. Her hand clasp was always cordial. Her little brothers were brooded over by her, with almost motherly care and solicitude. Wherever she went, there went happiness, contentment, and serenity. Her abounding cheerfulness and radiant health seemed to be prophetic of a long and useful life. Sickness and death came to the family, and a frailer child was taken away. Nobody had fears for Irene, and even when it was known that she was in peril, the fever raging, her strength breaking, we felt almost sure that she would be spared. Twice she rallied, and twice suffered a relapse, and at last the white ribbon on the door testified to thronging friends that she was no longer here. The happy, brave, buoyant, beautiful girl had been summoned, through pain and weariness, to the nearer presence and the higher service of the Lord she loved; she was an inhabitant now of the heavenly home.

Thinking of Irene, of her peculiarly bright face and earnest manner, of her fearless Christian life, and her uniform sunny-heartedness, I have been led to see that

personality is itself a gift, not to be tampered with. One by one we are brought into the kingdom, not in masses. One by one, our Shepherd guides us through the world. One by one, he deals with us. One by one, when the time comes, he gathers us to himself, and we are satisfied in the fulness of joy. A life which is frittered away in the attempt to imitate other imperfect lives is like water outpoured on the ground. The life which is filled with doing good, must first be good; and the source of goodness is the blessed Jesus, who is alone our perfect example.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CARE OF THE SICK.

SOONER or later most women have the care of the sick laid upon them as a sacred duty. To care successfully for the sick is no slight undertaking. To be a good nurse, is to be in one sense a very accomplished woman. A cheerful disposition, a patient temper, a sufficiency of physical vigor, and a willingness to obey the attending physician implicitly, are essential in assuming the responsibility of managing a sick-room.

A great artist was once asked with what he mixed his colors. Gazing keenly at the young aspirant who made the inquiry, he answered, "With brains, sir." If you wish to be a good nurse, you must have brains. Kind feelings, sympathy for suffering, desires to relieve pain, are all very well, but they are not enough. A cool firm hand, a steady eye, a light step, an arm that knows how to lift an aching head and adjust a rumped pillow, and deftness in changing linen, as well as gentleness in speaking to a patient, are necessary.

Floating through most girls' heads is an ideal of nursing, which is highly poetical and perfectly unprac-

tical. Cologne, flowers, soft ethereal robes, and grateful invalids, compose this vision of the chamber of illness, with Rose or Rebecca the guardian and centre of the paradise.

In fact, a long illness is a campaign, a succession of stubbornly-contested battles. Invalids are often fretful and impatient; not so amiable as when in health, and as unreasonable and petulant as children. Sometimes they are more like naughty children, than like grown-up men and women. Those who are about them must not forget that the capricious, whimsical, and complaining moods are the effect of tangled and jarring nerves of feebleness and pain, and that it is very unkind and foolish to resent them in the like manner.

It is incomprehensible to the well, who have had no personal experience of suffering, that such slight things can disturb and annoy the sick. Once when I was quite young, I had charge of a dear sister who was very ill indeed. Thinking her asleep, I sat down by a desk in her chamber, to write some letters. Presently something like a moan of despair reached my ears from her bed. "What is it?" I hastened to ask. "O M.," she answered, "The scratching of your pen is putting me in agony." A friend told me that, during convalescence after a fever, he was nearly distracted by seeing his nurse sitting near him with sewing in her hand. The regularly-recurring movement of the needle and thread, and the whirring of the

thread through the cloth, caused his super-sensitive nerves acute misery.

Whispering and conversing in studiously low tones, as though there were something to be kept from the patient's knowledge, are practices to be avoided. If it is necessary to talk, let the talk be carried on in a low but natural tone of voice, so that no suspicion of secrecy can be awakened.

A good nurse pays strict attention to the doctor's orders, and obeys them implicitly. If the case is critical, and there is danger of forgetting or misunderstanding any part of his directions, she writes them down, or requests him to do so. The mistake of a few drops in administering a remedy, or the substituting of one medicine for another, might cause the loss of a life, which might otherwise be saved. The good nurse never underrates her responsibility, yet never exaggerates it so that the thought of it makes her incompetent to the performance of its duties. While she is careful to do precisely what the doctor tells her to do, she must not be oblivious to the fact that the doctor cannot be at hand the whole of the time, and emergencies may arise when she must depend on her own judgment, and act with promptness.

Sometimes friends who call tell of treatment which has succeeded almost miraculously in their opinion in other cases. But were one to listen to all the volunteer physicians who recommend this and that nostrum,

the mind would become bewildered, and the patient would suffer. It is best, if one have a physician, to be guided by him only and entirely; and certainly nothing should be done, and no medicine given, without his permission and advice, while he remains as the medical attendant.

There are some simple things which every nurse should know; as, for instance, that a mustard-plaster on the pit of the stomach will put an arrest upon obstinate vomiting; that a hot foot-bath will often equalize the circulation, and insure pleasant and refreshing sleep; that a bran-bag heated and laid upon an aching part is often potential in soothing pain; and that mustard mixed with white of egg or molasses will not blister the most sensitive skin.

Your dress when you are caring for an invalid, should be made of a soft material which will not rustle or creak. Stiffly starched gowns are inadmissible on this account. Shoes should not squeak. The manner of moving around should be gentle and unhurried. For night-watching a loose flannel wrapper is invaluable. The longest and chilliest portion of the day is from 11 P. M. to 3 A. M. There is then, even in summer, a creeping, shivering cold about the air, and the vital powers are at their lowest. It is ebb-tide for sick and well, and between those hours the largest number of the race die. "Going at the turn of the night," says the aged nurse who has

set by many deathbeds, and often the words are proved true.

Sitting in an easy-chair, listening to the feeble, fluctuating breath, the nurse must be careful that she does not herself become chilled. She should have a thick shawl for herself to wear, if she feels the need of it; have it by her, so that she is not compelled to tiptoe around the room, or open bureau-drawers and closet-doors to find it. Her senses must be on the alert, for it is the elixir of life to her patient to have a good night. When nourishment is to be given, it must be arranged either in the room, or in one adjoining, before the household have retired, so that the sick person be not left alone.

In extreme illness there should be two watchers, one to relieve the other, and the fire should not be suffered to go out in the kitchen range.

Do not suffer vials, glasses, and saucers to accumulate, littering tables and crowding the mantelpiece. Keep everything about the room as neat and dainty as possible, and see that the ventilation is not neglected.

Meals are the events of the day, particularly to a convalescent. They should be prepared skilfully, and by themselves, and not subtracted from the ordinary breakfasts and dinners of the family. They should be served with great nicety, on the cleanest silver, with the finest linen, so that the tray looks like a picture.

Let the quality be excellent, but the quantity offered at once small, for nothing more certainly repels a delicate palate than that which borders on grossness or coarseness. Do not annoy an invalid by inquiries whether this or that will be agreeable to him or her, but let the meals come in the form of pleasant surprises. Still, when a desire is expressed, try as soon as possible to gratify it. Nature often suggests what is healing and helpful.

Be cheery, confident, bright and hopeful in your own manner, as well as tender and compassionate. Guard against a constant influx of visitors into the room of one who is very ill. Friends are kind in coming often with assiduous and cordial sympathy, to ask for those who are sick, and offer attention. It is much when we are in trouble, to be assured that we are environed by loving hearts, and that prayers are ascending for us in our sadness and anxiety. But a sick-room must be free from excitement, and no fear of giving offence and no mistaken sense of social duty should interfere with this.

The first obligation and the first consideration is the patient. Even in convalescence a judicious care must be exercised in the matter of receiving visitors, not allowing them to stay too long, nor to tax the slender stock of renewed health by undue conversation.

The nurse must not ignore for herself the need of

fresh air, repose, and food. The better her own physical condition, the better will she be able to care for the one who is suffering. Common sense, tact, amiability, obedience to orders, attention to details, and over all, trust in God, are the essential characteristics of a good nurse.

CHAPTER XXI.

ECONOMY AND EXTRAVAGANCE.

ECONOMY, strictly speaking, is good management, the fine and skilful balancing of ways and means, and the utilizing of resources. Extravagance is wandering beyond limitations, losing your substance without a proportionate gain, and spending more than your income justifies you in doing. Both terms, as applied to persons, are elastic and not arbitrary. It may be extravagant for Julia to do what is the wisest economy when done by Jane. Lottie may be as foolish and short-sighted in her desire to save as Ada is childish and frivolous in hers to spend. We cannot lay down a rule, or set a measure for others' frugality, because until we precisely know what an income may be, we have no right to criticise an outgo. In this regard the Master's rule is imperative, "Judge not, that ye be not judged; for with what measure ye mete, it shall be meted unto you."

It is noble to be thoughtfully economical, but ignoble to be penurious and scrimping simply from the passion of hoarding. The common sense of the world calls the man who hoards a miser, a name of force, concentrating a meaning of gloom and wretchedness.

The wealthiest and the poorest woman may alike economize, each showing in her nice and unerring appreciation of the situation, her equality to its demands, and her delicate tact and self-poise, that she understands and controls her resources. Indeed without proper economy, liberal generosity is often impossible, even to people who are commonly supposed to be far above want or anxiety.

One of the most important things for girls to acquire, is some practical knowledge of business. Many women are as ignorant all their lives as little children of the most ordinary technicalities and formalities of business. They do not know anything about investments, how interest is accumulated, legal rates of interest, or wise disposal of funds. If left by the death of their masculine protectors in the charge of an estate, they fall an easy prey to unscrupulous men, and are defrauded of their rights. While you are still a girl at home, set yourself to learning something, in a practical way, of these essential things. Persuade your parents to give you a monthly allowance, or if this be inconvenient, at least to let you do your own shopping. Learn what goods to buy, and something of their approximate value. Go to the market for your mother, and find out how to discriminate between the crisp freshness and fine bloom of vegetables and fruit when in excellent condition, and the wilted staleness of the same when unfit for use.

Learn how to select a piece of beef or mutton, and be able to direct the butcher what to cut for you, instead of airily suggesting to him that you would like "a good roast," or "a tender steak." Learn how to use fragments to advantage, that no waste may undermine you and prevent your success in your undertakings.

Of course you cannot learn this all at once. Good housekeeping is a science, and like other sciences it requires an apprenticeship before it is mastered. Far too many women undertake the cares of home before they have any training for the profession, and so they go through trials and tribulations which are as real and as wearing, as they are petty and vexatious. Begin by studying in your mother's kitchen, which you may depend will be better for you than the very best cooking-school, and learn the *how* and *why* of the every day operations which are proceeding there. When you are given the care of any part of the house, whether your own chamber, the family sitting-room, or the parlor, care for it thoroughly. Suffer no neglect in the departments under your eye. Whatever you do yourself, do thoroughly; and whatever is done for you, supervise it in such a manner that your subordinates will see that you understand their work, and know what ought to be its results. Do not be above attention to details; even apparently trifling minutiae have their part in making the comfort of a pleasant home.

Every woman should keep an account of her expenditure. The fact that you put down what you spend, in black and white, is a check on reckless spending. Extravagance buys what it happens to fancy in passing through a store or on the street; economy decides whether what it buys will be pleasing for an hour only, or for many days and weeks. Extravagance purchases perishable finery, and cheap imitations of expensive fabrics; economy waits till it can procure a good article, and then carries it home, and takes a legitimate pride in it.

Read the thirty-first chapter of Proverbs, and there you will see the exact representation of the woman who is an economist, as opposed to the woman who lives only for the present moment.

"She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

"She stretcheth out her hand to the poor, yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.

"Strength and honor are her clothing, and she shall rejoice in time to come."

CHAPTER XXII.

ONE THING AT A TIME.

THE atmosphere of our American life is sharp and bracing. We are nervous, quick, eager, and ardent. Most of us are in a hurry, and few of us are not nearly always busy. The father must hasten to his business, the mother has the sewing to do for all the restless little ones, the schoolgirl has her crowding studies, and the young lady her numerous engagements. So it comes to pass that we do not often have the leisure we need for quiet thinking. We cannot say with the Psalmist, "How love I thy law: it is my meditation all the day," for in fact we do not meditate. That process implies solitude, or at least some relief from incessant activity and constant conversation.

No soul ripens that has no time for thought, for communion with the Lord, for learning his will in the secret, silent places.

"Mine be the reverent, listening love,
That waits all day on thee,"

exclaims a sweet and tender poet.

"Calm me, my God, and keep me calm,
Soft resting on thy breast;
Soothe me with holy hymn and psalm,
And give my spirit rest,"

is the heart's cry of Bonar, whose sweet harp has ever been tuned to heavenly minstrelsy.

Dear girls, be contented to do what you can. We are often wearied with the sum of the day's duties. But the weariness which antedates them is sometimes equal to that which follows after they are accomplished. Nothing wears out a human life like worry, a rust which eats into all contentment, and a friction which makes continual discord. One by one the moments come; one by one the duties. Doing one thing at a time, and trusting that God will give time and strength for every obligation, you will not feel burdened and weighted, but will go through life buoyantly, as though you had the wings of a bird.

"He walks as in the presence of God," says Jeremy Taylor, "that converses with him in frequent prayer and frequent communion, that runs to him in all his necessities, that asks counsel of him in all his doubtings, that opens all his wants to him, that weeps before him for his sins, that asks remedy and support for his weakness, that fears him as a Judge, reverences him as a Lord, obeys him as a Father, and loves him as a Patron."

It is the sweet peculiarity of a truly pious heart that it can love and serve the King while cumbered with many cares. You have perhaps read the beautiful legend of Francesca. Tradition says that she was a noble lady of Rome, who, amid the splendors of court life and the

pageantry of a lofty station, preserved the simplicity of that consecration which loves to sit at the feet of the Lord. Every day at certain periods she retired to her oratory, there to engage in exercises of devotion; but if called away, as she often was, she went cheerfully, saying that "a wife and mother, when called upon, must quit her God at the altar, and find him in her household affairs."

Alas! too often we do not, like Francesca, make the endeavor to have stated times for thought and prayer. So many voices call us, so many attractions divert us, that we have no time for that devout meditation which would help us heavenward.

"This *one* thing I do," must be the predominant feeling of a life which is powerful and influential in the best sense. Try, no matter how busy you may be, no matter how manifold your interruptions, to set before you the thought, as a daily inspiration, that you belong to Christ, and that his will must be your first consideration. Ask him every day to make plain to you the meaning of his dealings with you. Desire to know the mind of Jesus. Though, like Martha, you must be occupied with the preparation of the chambers and the dining-hall, like Mary, sit still in the house at times, and let the blessing of the Lord fill your spirit, so that he shall himself say that you have chosen the good part which shall not be taken away.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE IDEAL GIRL.

THE ideal girl! What shall be her characteristics? In what colors shall we paint her?

First, she must have health and vigor of body. She will set before herself a high physical standard, and try to attain to it. Good digestion, good food, fresh air, bathing, exercise, plenty of sleep, and cheerful temperament, are factors in producing perfect health. The young girl who is wearied with a short walk, who sits up very late, and lies in bed correspondingly in the morning, who screams with nervous terror at a mouse or faints at a caterpillar's touch, who cannot listen to the recital of a painful story, or control herself in the presence of sudden fright or calamity, is lacking in that elasticity of the bodily life which alone makes the highest soul-life possible.

Our minds and bodies are co-partners. They are inter-dependent. A thousand subtle chords vibrate from one to the other. At one time a sort of fine-lady ideal was held up before girls, and they wished to be fragile and willowy, pale and delicate-looking; thinking that thus they would be spiritual and shadowy, and respond more sensitively to all the intellectual influ-

ences which might come to them. This notion is now banished from books and thoughts. To-day the girl that all are praising is the girl who can ride on horse-back for many a swift, delightful mile without fatigue, who can propel a boat with graceful motion of the oars across the silver waves, who can swim, skate, play lawn tennis, and engage in various athletic exercises naturally and gayly. She can eat a bit of good beef-steak, she wears stout shoes, she is not bound tightly in a lung-compressing corsage, and she has the cool, firm hand, the bright eyes, the clear complexion, and the light-heartedness which come of a body unclogged in its machinery by any weight of pain or feebleness.

The ideal girl, in the second place, is a good house-keeper.

She will learn how to order her servants, or how to do her work without them, how to make a sweet, nutritious loaf of bread, to manage a range, to make a bed, to purchase supplies, to avoid waste, and to make home pleasant and charming and full of gracious and inviting hospitality. She will have a place for everything and everything in its place; but hers will not be that painful and rigid order which is distressed and distressing, which makes her unhappy if it be for an instant infringed, and which gives to the home the air of a prison. Good housekeepers are good home-makers, and the ideal girl will scatter sunshine and beauty around her path day by day. She will find time to set

a flower beside her brother's plate at breakfast, to mend her little sister's broken doll, and help her little friend with the puzzle of his problem in algebra, and her father will discover in her the joy of his days and the ornament of his household.

Thirdly, the ideal girl is self-reliant. By no means pushing, forward, or aggressive, but able to take care of herself, and armored in modest courage. Not long ago a young friend of mine was sent with a party of people to England to study a difficult branch of art. "Were you not afraid to let Alice go so far away, when she must depend so much on herself for guidance?" was asked of one of her relatives. "Not at all," was the reply. "Alice is a responsible person. I would trust her anywhere." Yet as self-reliance may degenerate into arrogant and impertinent self-assertion, and as courage may become bravado, the ideal girl needs to rest for support always on a Divine helper.

She must therefore, fourthly, be a Christian. Woman owes everything to Christ. In lands where the Bible is not the rule of life she is either a slave or a toy, a drudge or a plaything, and always degraded, treated as an inferior, and kept secluded, idle, and under surveillance. It is only where the cross is uplifted and the Saviour followed that she takes her position as queen of the race. The sacred books of false religions speak of her slightingly and with contempt. It is only the Bible which holds her up in honor and reverence,

which assigns to her the highest style of work, and expects of her the highest style of devotion. There can be no greater ingratitude possible to a woman in a Christian land than to withhold her allegiance from the Lord who bought her with his precious blood.

The earlier in life this question of service is rightly decided, the sooner will peace and beauty adorn the brow of her who is a daughter of God.

The ideal girl will be open to conviction. She will not harden nor crystallize at once into a certain mould, nor stay always in one narrow rut, nor revolve for ever in one groove. So many avenues are open to knowledge, so many new inventions and discoveries are all the time cushioning the places which used to be rough, and bringing remote points near, that nobody can afford to stand still. Firm in matters of principle, but receptive and responsive so far as the affairs of life are concerned, the girl of whom we are talking will be sympathetic with the reform movements of the world, interested in missionary enterprises, and self-denying that Christ's kingdom may come in the hearts of men.

Such a girl will possess mental culture. Not stopping at the point where she was when she left school, nor satisfied with having learned the alphabet of certain studies, she will at least keep in view the best literature, and read poetry, history, and biography, so that she will become more and more a delightful companion. She will not fear to express her thoughts in con-

versation, nor will she dread to say a word for Jesus when the opportunity comes. And it will be her aim, wherever she is, to help others. That is a poor life and a restricted culture which gets, but does not give. Bestowal is the highest and the dearest pleasure a human being can know, because as we impart we are like to our Heavenly Father who is always sending blessings in lavish measure to those who are in want.

“To do good and to communicate forget not.”

“Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.”

“Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”

These are mottoes for a lifetime. We commend them to the ideal girl.

8-60

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Bismarck 13-0

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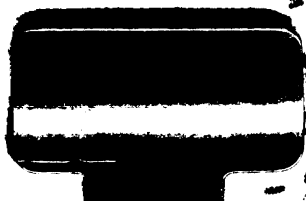
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300
152

1080
600

480

120 Mount + Rake
105 - chicken + turkey

May 40
23-8-
Total



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